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MEMOIRS

OF THE

DUC DE SAINT-SIMON.

VOLUME IV.

The Cour de France Edition

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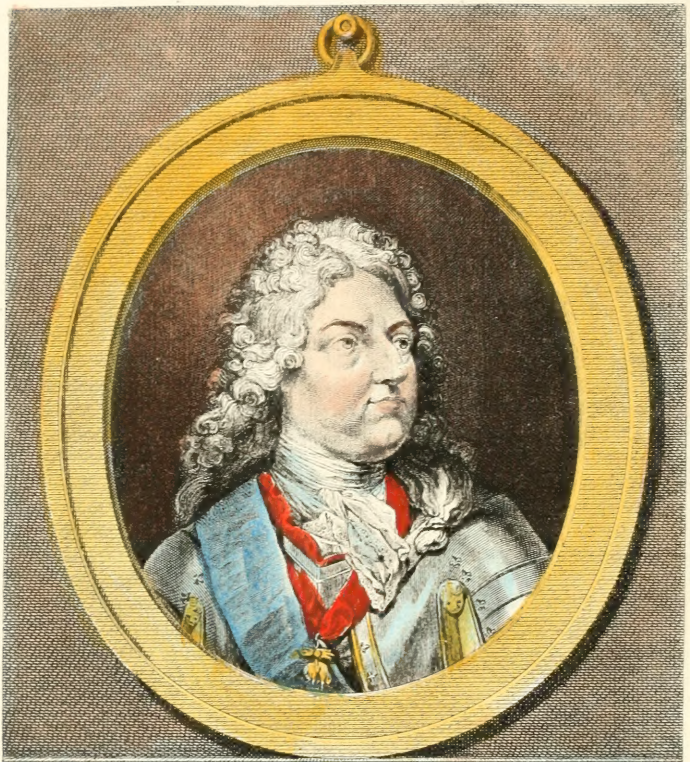

PHILIPPE D'ORLÉANS
RÉGENT.

MEMOIRS

OF THE

DUC DE SAINT-SIMON

ON THE TIMES OF

LOUIS XIV. AND THE REGENCY.

Translated and Abridged

BY

KATHARINE PRESCOTT WORMELEY,

FROM THE EDITION COLLATED WITH THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT
BY M. CHÉRUEL.

ILLUSTRATED WITH PORTRAITS FROM THE ORIGINAL.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. IV.

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MEMOIRS

OF

THE DUC DE SAINT-SIMON.

I.

The Duc d'Orléans unprepared for the king's death.

THE king's death overtook the indolence of the Duc d'Orléans as if it were unexpected; he was still precisely where, as we have seen, I left him. He had made no progress in any of the resolutions he ought to have taken, either on matters of business or in the choice of persons. He was now overwhelmed with orders to give and matters to regulate; each more petty or more commonplace than the others, but all so immediately necessary that the very case I had predicted to him happened, — he had no time to think of anything important.

I heard of the king's death on waking, and went at once to make my bow to the new monarch. The first wave had passed; I found myself almost alone. From there I went to the Duc d'Orléans, who was surrounded in his apartments, where there was not room for a pin to drop to the ground. I took him aside into his cabinet to make a last effort, which proved absolutely useless, for the convocation of the States-general. I saw him again later during the dinner-hour, when he was less overwhelmed with people, and he then acknowledged to me that he had made no lists, nor any choice except those of which I have spoken, nor had he decided upon his course about anything. It was no time then to blame or scold him. I merely shrugged my shoulders and exhorted him to, at least, be on his guard against solicitations and the ministers. Then I put him on the will and the codicil, and asked how he meant to conduct himself about them before parliament, where we were to go the next day for the reading of the two documents. He was the firmest man in the world in his cabinet, and the least so elsewhere. He promised marvels; I again pointed out to him the importance of the occasion and all that would result for him. I was with him almost two hours.

The session of Parliament for the regency. The Duc du Maine arrives.

The next day, at seven in the morning, we, the peers, went together to the parliament with all our carriages and cortège and suites. Less than half a quarter of an hour after we were in our seats the bastards arrived. M. du Maine was bursting with joy. That expression seems strange, but his bearing cannot otherwise be rendered. A smiling, satisfied air covered an air of confidence and audacity, which was visible nevertheless, in spite of the politeness that seemed endeavouring to repress it. He bowed to right and left and darted his glance at every one. After advancing a few steps he bowed to the presidents with a jubilant manner, which the bow of the chief-president, Mesmes, reflected openly. To the peers, the gravity, not to say the respect, slowness, and depth of his bow on all three sides, was indeed speaking. His head remained bent even after he had raised himself up — so heavy is the weight of crimes, even at a moment when triumph is no longer doubtful. My eyes followed him closely, and I remarked that on all three sides the bows that were returned to him were stiff and short. As for his brother, nothing appeared in him but his usual coldness.

They were scarcely seated before M. le Duc arrived, and, an instant after, the Duc d'Orléans. After a short silence I saw the chief-president say a few words in a low voice to the Duc d'Orléans, and then, in a loud tone, send the deputation of parliament to fetch the king's will and its codicil, which had both been deposited in the same place. Silence continued during this great but short expectation; each man looked at the rest, but without stirring. We, the peers, were on the lower seats; the doors were supposed to be shut, but the audience chamber was crowded with inquisitive persons of all qualities and stations, and the numerous suites of those who took part in the session.

Reading of the king's will and codicil.

The deputation was not long in returning. The will and the codicil were placed in the hands of the chief-president, who presented them, without yielding his hold upon them, to the Duc d'Orléans, after which he passed them from hand to hand along the judges to Dreux, counsellor of parliament, saying that Dreux read well and in a loud voice which would be heard by all from his seat, which was above that of the presidents and near the window of the robing-room. It can be imagined in what silence we listened, and how all eyes and ears were fastened on the reader. Amid his joy the Duc du Maine betrayed a troubled soul; he felt himself at the moment of a great operation which he had to undergo. The Duc d'Orléans showed nothing but tranquil attention.

I shall not pause upon the two documents, which related exclusively to the grandeur and power of the bastards, to Mme. de Maintenon and Saint-Cyr, to the choice of education for the king, and to that of the Council of Regency, which delivered the Duc d'Orléans, robbed of all authority, to the unlimited power bestowed upon the Duc du Maine. I observed a gloom and a sort of indignation overspread all faces as the reading went on, which turned to a species of voiceless ferment when the codicil was read. The Duc du Maine felt it, and turned pale; for his whole attention was given to the faces of those present; and my eyes followed his while I listened, turning them now and then to the countenance of the Duc d'Orléans.

Speech of the Duc d'Orléans.

The reading over, the prince prepared to speak. Passing his eyes around the whole assembly, he took off his hat, replaced it, and said a few words of eulogy and grief about the late king. Then, raising his voice, he declared that he had nothing but approval for all that related to the education of the young king, and to an establishment so fine and so useful as that of Saint-Cyr, the arrangements for which had just been listened to. But with regard to the dispositions that concerned the government of the State, he must speak differently of those contained in the will and the codicil. He found it difficult, he said, to reconcile them with what the king had said to him during the last days of his life, and with the assurances he had publicly given him that nothing would be found in those arrangements with which he would not be content; in consequence of which the king had subsequently referred all orders and the ministers themselves to him. The king could therefore not have fully understood the force of what he had been made to do (here the Duc d'Orléans looked in the direction of the Duc du Maine), inasmuch as the Council of Regency was chosen, and his, the regent's, authority so fixed by the terms of the will that no real authority was left to him. Such derogation, he went on to say, offered to his right of birth, to his attachment to the person of the king, to his love and his fidelity to the State, was of a nature not to be endured with preservation of his honour; and he trusted sufficiently in the esteem of those there present to feel confident that his regency would be declared by them such as it ought to be, namely: complete, independent, with the right to choose its own Council (to which he should not deny the deliberative voice); because he could only discuss public business with those persons who, being approved by the public, possessed also his own confidence. This short address seemed to make a great impression.

The will abrogated as to the administration of the State.

The Duc du Maine apparently wished to speak. As he took off his hat, the Duc d'Orléans advanced his head beyond M. le Duc and said to him in a curt tone: "Monsieur, you will speak in your turn." In a moment the affair turned in accordance with the wishes of the Duc d'Orléans. The composition of the Council of Regency and its power were overthrown. The choice of the Council was given to the regent of the kingdom, with the full authority of regency, and the decision on matters of business only to a plurality of the votes of the Council, the vote of the regent counting as two in case of an equal division. In this way all favours and penalties were put into the sole hands of the regent. The acclamations were such that the Duc du Maine dared not say a word. He reserved himself to maintain the codicil, which would neutralize all that the regent had now obtained.

After a few moments' silence the Duc d'Orléans spoke again. He expressed surprise that the dispositions of the will had not sufficed the persons who had suggested them; and he pointed out that, not content with being there made masters of the State, they had themselves discovered certain clauses so peculiar that, in order to secure themselves, they needed something more to make them masters of the king's person, of his own person, of the Court and of Paris. He added that if his honour was wounded by the will to an extent which, it seemed to him, the assembly felt as he did himself, it was still more violated by the dispositions of the codicil, which left him neither liberty nor life in safety, and placed the person of the king under the absolute control of those who had dared to profit by the weakness of a dying monarch to wring from him that which he could never have intended. He concluded by declaring that it was impossible to exercise the regency under such conditions, and he doubted not that the wisdom of the assembly would annul a codicil which could not be maintained, because its dispositions would fling all France into the greatest and most inevitable misfortunes. While the prince was speaking a grave and deep silence applauded him without other expression.

Dispute, first public then private, between the regent and the Duc du Maine.

The Duc du Maine, who had turned all colours, began to speak, and this time he was allowed to do so. He said that the education of the king, and consequently his person, being confided to him, it was quite natural that he should have, to the exclusion of all others, complete authority over the king's household, civil and military, without which he could not undertake to serve him or make himself responsible for his person. After which he vaunted his attachment, so well-known to the late king, who had placed his sole confidence in it. The Duc d'Orléans interrupted him at these words, to which he demurred. M. du Maine tried to temper them by praises of the Maréchal de Villeroy, who was associated with him, but always under him, in the same duties and the same confidence. The Duc d'Orléans replied that it would be a strange state of things if the first and most entire confidence were not placed in him; and further that he could not live near the young king under the authority and protection of those who had made themselves absolute masters both within and without the household, and of Paris itself, by the command of the regiments of the guards.

The dispute grew hot, and was carried on in short phrases each interrupting the other, until, fearing the end of an altercation that was growing indecent, I yielded to the persuasion of the Duc de La Force (who leaned over to me across the Duc de La Rochefoucauld, who was seated between us), and made a sign with my hand to the Duc d'Orléans to go out and finish the discussion in the chamber of inquests, which has a door of communication into the audience chamber. I was led to do this because I saw that M. du Maine was getting stronger and muttering something about division of authority, while the Duc d'Orléans was not maintaining his rightful position, inasmuch as he was condescending to plead his cause against the Duc du Maine. He was short-sighted, and his mind was so wholly bent on attacking and answering that he did not see my sign. A few moments later I made it again, equally without success; then I rose, advanced a few steps, and said, though still at quite a distance: "Monsieur, if you were to go with M. du Maine into the chamber of inquests you could talk more comfortably there." As I spoke I went nearer and made him a sign with my hand and eyes which he was able to distinguish. He returned it with a nod, and I was hardly reseated before I saw him pass in front of M. le Duc and the Duc du Maine, who both rose and followed him into the chamber of inquests. I could not see who else followed them, for the whole assembly rose as they passed out, and then reseated itself in the deepest silence and did not stir again. Some time later the Comte de Toulouse rose and went into the inquest-chamber; and shortly after the Duc de La Force did the same.

The latter was gone but a short time. Returning to the assembly he passed the Duc de La Rochefoucauld and me and put his head between that of the Duc de Sully and mine (because he did not want to be overheard by La Rochefoucauld), and said to me: "In God's name go in there; things are going very badly. The Duc d'Orléans is weakening; stop the dispute, bring him back, and make him say, as soon as he is seated, that it is too late to end the session before dinner, but it will be renewed in the afternoon. Then, in the interval," added La Force, "summon all the king's lawyers to the Palais-Royal, talk with the doubtful peers and with the leaders of the pack among the magistrates."

The advice seemed to me good and important. I left the hall and went to the chamber of inquests. I found a large circle, well supplied with spectators. The Comte de Toulouse was near the entrance, a little in advance, but still in the circle. M. le Duc was about the middle of it, also in advance, and both were at some distance from the fireplace, before which the Duc d'Orléans and the Duc du Maine were standing alone, disputing with gestures but in low tones, each of them with an inflamed air. I considered the scene for a few moments; then I walked towards the fireplace with the air of a man who has something to say. "What is it, monsieur?" said the Duc d'Orléans, with sharp impatience. "A hurried word, monsieur," I replied, "that I want to say to you." He continued to talk to the Duc du Maine, I making almost a third in their conversation. I renewed my appeal. He turned his ear to me. "Not here," I said, taking his hand, "come over there;" and with that I drew him to a corner. The Comte de Toulouse, who was near by, drew back, and so did the whole circle on that side, and the Duc du Maine behind them.

I whispered to the Duc d'Orléans that there was no hope of gaining anything from M. du Maine, who would never sacrifice the codicil to any reasons; that the length of the conference was becoming indecent, as well as useless and dangerous; that he was being made a spectacle to all who entered, and who were looking at him and watching; and that the only thing to do was to return to the audience-chamber and adjourn the session instantly. "You are right," he said, "and I will do it." "But," I said, "do it at once; don't let them entice you out of it. It is M. de La Force who sends you this advice by me." He left me without another word and went to M. du Maine, to whom he merely said that it was late, and the matter would be concluded after dinner.

I still stood where he had left me. I saw the Duc du Maine make him a bow and retire; at the same time M. le Duc advanced to the Duc d'Orléans and they talked together. The colloquy lasted but a short time and was very amicable, though M. le Duc had an eager air. As it was necessary to pass close by me to re-enter the audience-chamber, they both came up to me. At that moment I became aware that M. le Duc had asked the Duc d'Orléans to appoint him to the Council as its chief, inasmuch as the will was now abrogated. I think, though he had not dared to tell me of it, that the Duc d'Orléans had already bound himself to give the place, for M. le Duc seemed to summon him to do so, rather than ask it of him. At any rate, the Duc d'Orléans now told me that he should speak of the matter to parliament before adjourning the session. I bowed with an air of congratulation and approval to M. le Duc, and we re-entered the audience-chamber.[1]

The noise accompanying such entrance having quieted down, the Duc d'Orléans said it was too late to impose longer on the assembly; that we must now go to dinner, and return afterwards to finish the session; adding immediately that he thought it proper M. le Duc should enter the Council of Regency and take his position as chief of it; and as the assembly had now done him the justice due to his birth and his office of regent, he should explain to it what he thought as to the form that should be given to the government, expecting to profit by the lights and the wisdom of the assembly, to which he should henceforth grant its former right of remonstrance. These words were followed by loud and general applause, and the session adjourned immediately.

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[1] Louis-Henri, son of Louis III., Duc de Bourbon (Condé), and Louise, daughter of Louis XIV. and Mme. de Montespan; born in 1692; prime minister of Louis XV. after the death of the regent, from 1723 to 1726. He was the last to bear the distinctive title of "M. le Duc." — Tr.

The regent declares M. le Duc chief of the Council of Regency.

I approached the Duc d'Orléans as he left the hall and whispered in his ear: "The moments are precious; I follow you to the Palais-Royal." When I reached there I found that curiosity had gathered a great crowd, to which were added some who had been spectators at the parliament. All those with whom I was acquainted asked me eagerly for news. I contented myself with replying that everything was going well and in due form, but was not yet finished. The Duc d'Orléans had passed into his cabinet, where I found him alone with Canillac, who had waited for him. We took our measures at once. The Duc d'Orléans sent for d'Aguesseau, *procureur-général* (afterwards chancellor), and Joly de Fleury, first *avocat-général.* It was then two o'clock. Dinner was served on a small table with four covers, where Canillac, Conflans, first gentleman of the bedchamber to the Duc d'Orléans, and I sat down with the prince. I may mention in passing that this was the last meal I ever took with him, except one at the Duchesse d'Orléans' house at Bagnolet.

The Maréchal de Villeroy had stayed behind at Versailles. He had charged Groesbriant to go to the parliament-chamber and send the news to him frequently. He received three couriers following closely upon one another, all bearing news that filled him with such joy and hope — him and his former love, the Duchesse de Ventadour — that they felt no doubt of the codicil being maintained and of the will being virtually re-established. Unable to contain themselves, they spread the news of a complete victory of M. du Maine over the Duc d'Orléans all about Versailles. Paris was also misled in the same way by emissaries of the Duc du Maine, who were despatched on all sides. But their triumph was not of long duration.

Brief joy of the Marechal de Villeroy.

We returned to parliament soon after four o'clock. I went alone in my coach before the Duc d'Orléans, and found every one already in his seat. I was looked at, so it seemed to me, with great curiosity; I don't know whether they had learned where I came from. I was careful that my behaviour should show nothing. In passing the Duc de La Force I merely said that his advice was salutary, that there was reason to hope for all success, and that I had told the Duc d'Orléans the thought was his and he had sent me. After the arrival of the regent, and the tumult inseparable from a numerous suite had quieted down, the prince said that matters must be taken up where they were left in the morning; that he must inform the assembly he had come to no agreement with M. du Maine, and he must therefore bring before it once more the monstrous clauses of a codicil wrung from the dying king, — clauses more strange than those of the will itself, which the court of parliament had already adjudged should not be executed; and if so, neither should the person of the king, the Court, Paris, consequently the State, be handed over to the Duc du Maine; nor yet the person, liberty, and life

The afternoon session. Speech of the Duc d'Orléans.

of the regent, which the Duc du Maine would be in a position to rule the moment he was absolute master of the king's household, civil and military. The court of parliament must surely see all that would necessarily result from such an unheard-of innovation, and he therefore relied upon its intelligence, its prudence, wisdom, equity, and love for the State to declare what it thought.

The codicil wholly abrogated.

M. du Maine now seemed as contemptible on the field of battle as he had been formidable in the obscurity of cabinets. He had the air of a condemned convict; and his usually ruddy face was as pale as death. He replied in a low voice that was scarcely intelligible, and with an air as humble and respectful as it was audacious earlier in the day. The vote was taken without listening to him, and the complete abrogation of the codicil was passed as it were with one voice. This was done as hastily as the abrogation of the will in the morning; both acts being the result of sudden indignation. The king's lawyers ought to have spoken before the vote was taken, and they were there before any one voted. Moreover, the president did not call for the votes; they anticipated the order of proceedings. D'Aguesseau, though *procureur-général*, and Fleury, *avocat-général*, then spoke, — the first in few words; the latter more at length and making a fine speech. As it exists in the libraries I shall only say that it was in all ways and throughout favourable to the Duc d'Orléans.

The regent invested with all power.

After they had spoken, the Duc du Maine, seeing himself shorn of everything, tried a last resource. He represented, with more vigour than might have been expected from the appearance he presented at the second session, but still cautiously, that if he were robbed of the authority given him by the codicil he should ask to be discharged from the guardianship of the king and from all responsibility for his person, retaining only the superintendence of his education. The Duc d'Orléans at once replied, "Very willingly, monsieur; that is all-sufficient." Whereupon Mesmes, the president, as completely crushed as the Duc du Maine, called for the votes. Each person answered by agreeing to that conclusion, and the decree was made in such shape that no sort of power remained to the Duc du Maine, who was placed entirely in the hands of the regent, with the right of the latter to put into the Council of Regency whom he pleased, and to remove any as he thought best; also of doing whatever he judged proper as to the form to be given to the government; authority in matters of business only being vested in the Council of Regency by plurality of votes, that of the regent counting as two in case of an equal division. M. le Duc was declared chief of the Council of Regency under the regent.

While the votes were being taken and judgment delivered the Duc du Maine sat with his eyes lowered, seemingly more dead than alive, and quite motionless. His son and his brother gave no sign of taking part in anything. The judgment was received with loud acclamations from the crowd around the audience-chamber, which soon filled the rest of the building, as the news spread of what had been decided.

Speech of the regent, indicating his course.

As soon as this noise, which was rather prolonged, had quieted, the regent made a short, courteous, and dignified speech of thanks to the assembly; protesting the care with which he should employ the authority thus given to him for the good of the State. After which he said it was now time to inform the assembly of the forms that he thought necessary to establish to aid him in the administration of the State. He added that he did this with all the more confidence because what he proposed to do was only the execution of plans which M. le Duc de Bourgogne (it was so he called him) had resolved upon, and which were found among his papers. He made a short and beautiful eulogy of the ideas and intentions of that prince; and then announced that, besides the Council of Regency, which would be supreme, and from which all the decisions of the government would emanate, he proposed to establish other councils: one for foreign affairs, one for war, one for the navy, one for financial matters, one for ecclesiastical affairs, and one for the internal affairs of the kingdom. He proposed to select certain magistrates from the assembly before him to enter the two latter councils and assist them with their ideas on the police of the kingdom, on questions of jurisprudence, and on all that related to the liberties of the Gallican Church. The applause of the magistrates hereupon burst forth, and the crowd responded. The president closed the session with a very brief compliment to the regent, who rose, as did the rest of the assembly, and all departed.

We must remember here the very singular coincidence in the same thought about these councils between the Duc de Chevreuse and me, which I have related elsewhere; councils adopted and determined upon by M. le Duc de Bourgogne, and found, as the regent had stated, among his papers. It is difficult to render the impression made by the mention of that august name, or to what point the memory of that prince seemed precious, and his person regretted and respected with sincere veneration.

Madame asks one sole favour of the regent.

The regent went straight from the parliament to Versailles, for it was very late; and he wanted to see the king before he went to bed, as if to render him an account of what had taken place. From there he went to see Madame. She ran to meet him, and embraced him in a transport of joy. After the first questions and congratulations were over she told him she desired nothing but the happiness of the State through a good and wise government, and his own good fame; that she should never ask him for any favour save one, and that one was solely for his own good and his honour; but she wanted his pledged word upon it, — namely, never to employ in anything, however trifling, the Abbé Dubois, who was the greatest knave and the most utter scoundrel that there was in the world, of which she had ten thousand proofs; a scoundrel who, by dint of creeping, meant to thrust himself everywhere, and would sell him, and the State, too, for his own interests. She said various other things about him, and pressed her son so much that she finally drew a positive promise from him never to employ the Abbé Dubois in any way.

I reached Versailles an hour later, and went to see Mme. la Duchesse d'Orléans, who appeared to me to be trying to seem glad. I avoided giving her details, on the ground that I must go and rest; in fact, it was really necessary. I learned the next day of the promise exacted and given, of the total exclusion of the Abbé Dubois. We shall see but too soon that the promises of the Duc d'Orléans were only words, or rather sounds that beat the air.

The king's heart taken to the Grands-Jésuites. Marvellous ingratitude.

Friday, Sept. 6, Cardinal de Rohan carried the late king's heart to the Grands-Jésuites with very little pomp or cortège. Except such as were actually on duty, not six persons belonging to the Court went to the Grands-Jésuites for the ceremony. It is not for me, who, following the example of my father, never in my life missed attending the anniversary of the death of Louis XIII. at Saint-Denis (where I have now gone for fifty-two years, without ever seeing another person present) to call attention to this quick ingratitude.

Visit of the regent to Mme. de Maintenon.

On the same day the regent did an action of the rarest merit if the thought of God had led him to do it, but really of great unworthiness, because religion had no part in it, and he ought to have had too much respect for himself to have shown to the world so hastily what safety there was in persecuting and reviling him in the most persistent and cruel way. He went at eight o'clock in the morning to see Mme. de Maintenon at Saint-Cyr. He was nearly an hour with that enemy who had wanted to make him lose his head and had so recently delivered him over, bound hand and foot, to the Duc du Maine by the monstrous terms of the king's will and codicil. The regent promised her during this visit that the four thousand francs which the late king had given her every month should be continued. He also told her that if she wanted more she had only to ask for it; and he assured her of his protection for Saint-Cyr, — where all the classes of young ladies were assembled for his inspection as he left.

It is well to know that besides the estate of Maintenon and other property belonging to this famous and fatal witch, the establishment of Saint-Cyr, which had an income of more than four hundred thousand francs and much money laid by, was bound by the terms of its foundation to receive Mme. de Maintenon if she wished to retire there; to obey her in all things as the sole and absolute superior; to maintain her and all whom she brought with her — servants, carriages, and equipments — in the manner she desired; her own table and other food to be supplied in the same way; and all this at the cost of the establishment, which engagement was punctually fulfilled until her death. Thus she had no need of the liberality of forty-eight thousand francs a year. It would have been enough if the Duc d'Orléans had simply forgotten her existence and left her in peace at Saint-Cyr.

The regent was careful not to tell me of this visit, either before or after; neither did I take the trouble to reproach him and make him feel ashamed of it. It made a great talk in the world and was not approved. The Spanish affair was not forgotten, and the story of the will and the codicil was the topic of all conversations.

Removal of the king from Versailles to Vincennes.

Saturday, September 7, was the day fixed for the first *lit de justice* of the young king; but as he had taken cold during the night it was postponed, and parliament, which was about to rise for its holiday, was continued a week longer. The next day the regent, who was hampered by the life at Versailles because he liked to live in Paris and have his pleasures close beside him, proposed to remove the king to Vincennes; but finding great opposition in the Court physicians (all of them conveniently lodged at Versailles) to the removal of the king's person, making his little cold their pretext, he sent for the Paris physicians who had been summoned to attend the late king. They, having nothing to gain by the Court's residence at Versailles, laughed at the other doctors, and on their advice the king was taken, Monday, 19th, to Vincennes, where all was ready to receive him.

Obsequies of the late king.

On the same day the body of the late king was taken to Saint-Denis. I have already said that nothing was either ordered or forbidden about his obsequies; it was arranged to follow the last example, in order to avoid expense, embarrassment, and tedious ceremonies. Louis XIII., in his modesty and humility, had himself ordered his own funeral to be as plain as possible. Those virtues, together with many others that were Christian and heroic, he had not transmitted to his son. But the precedent of his example as to the funeral was used, and no one criticised the action or thought it wrong; so true is it that personal attachment and gratitude are virtues that have flown to heaven with Astræa; as had been amply shown at the Grands-Jésuites a few days earlier when the king's heart was taken there, — that heart that had never loved any one, and had been so little loved itself. M. le Duc, instead of the Duc d'Orléans, who did not feel himself obliged to go, headed the procession.

The prisons opened. Horrors.

The day after the arrival of the king at Vincennes, the regent worked in the morning with the different secretaries of State, whom he had ordered to bring him lists of all the *lettres de cachet* in their offices, with the reasons for each, many of which proved to be very short. Most of the *lettres de cachet* for exile or imprisonment had been issued for Jansenism and in consequence of the bull Unigenitus; many of them for reasons known to the king alone and those who had caused them to be issued; others came down from the time of preceding ministries, among them many now wholly unknown and long forgotten. The regent set all these persons at liberty, both exiles and prisoners, except such as were condemned for actual crimes, bringing endless benedictions on his head for an act of justice and humanity. Very singular tales were told in consequence; some of them very strange, making the public deplore the misery of the victims and the tyranny of the last reign and its ministers. Among those who were found in the Bastille was a man arrested thirty-five years earlier on the day he arrived in Paris from Italy, where he belonged and whence he came to travel. It was not known why he was arrested or whether he had ever been interrogated; as, in fact, was the case with many others. He was thought to have been imprisoned by mistake. When told that he had his liberty, he asked sadly what he should do with it. He said he had not a sou, that he knew no one in Paris, not even a single street, nor a soul in France; that his relations in Italy were apparently dead since he left them, and his property had probably been divided up during the many years when they had heard nothing of him; in short, he knew not what to do with himself. He asked to be allowed to remain in the Bastille for the rest of his days with food and lodging. This was granted him, with all the liberty he chose to take. As for those who were taken from dungeons where the hatred of the ministers, the Jesuits, and the promoters of the bull had consigned them, the horror of the state in which they were found dismayed every one and made credible all the cruelties which they related as soon as they were fully at liberty.

During the first days after we took up our residence in Paris, that is to say, as soon as the king was at Vincennes, the councils were discussed between the Duc d'Orléans and me. It was not without some reproach on my part that these selections had still to be made. He began to talk doubtfully about the place of president of the finances, though he had promised it to the Duc de Noailles, as I have already said, before the death of the king. Although by this time I had reason to know what to expect personally from that gallant man, I felt I owed more to the State and to our original plan than to myself. I still thought him capable of good work, trained as he was for two years by Desmarets. His wealth and his great resources assured me of his having clean hands; also his ambition and his great efforts to do well made him, as I thought, fit for so important a place, where I wanted a seigneur, and for which I saw none to equal him. I therefore confirmed the Duc d'Orléans in his intention to give it to him.

At the same time I managed to fortify the regent against the efforts that were being made to destroy Cardinal de

Noailles. Cardinals de Rohan and de Bissy, the Nuncio Bentivoglio, and the other promoters of the bull, were in the deepest anxiety as to the treatment Cardinal de Noailles might receive after the death of the king. They were dying of fear lest he should be placed at the head of ecclesiastical affairs; they moved heaven and earth to prevent it; they called for help from every one; they asked of the principal personages protection for religion and "the good cause." Bissy came to me, quite distracted, before we left Versailles, and I answered him with frigid modesty. One evening, when there was a large but select company at the Duc d'Orléans' soon after our settlement in Paris, I saw the Duc de Noailles talking to Canillac, and both of them glancing at me. Immediately after, Canillac came to me and took me aside to represent the danger of delay in declaring Cardinal de Noailles head of the council of conscience, or ecclesiastical affairs (the council bore both names), the movements and intrigues of the opposing party, and the embarrassing position of the Duc d'Orléans if he gave time for the pope to write him a friendly brief, asking as a favour that Cardinal de Noailles should not be placed at the head of that council. This argument struck me forcibly; I agreed with Canillac that there was no time to lose. He proposed to me to speak on the instant to the Duc d'Orléans, and I did so a moment later. I made him afraid of the predicament of either disobliging the pope or of giving him a footing on which to meddle in the internal affairs of the government, — a precedent which would certainly result in dangerous consequences. He felt this, but seemed reluctant to end the matter. I then proposed to him (to avoid all other influence) to declare at once the offices of the Duc and Cardinal de Noailles; to call the duke up then and there,

Cardinal de Noailles made chief of the council on ecclesiastical affairs.

announce the appointments aloud before the assembled company, and tell the duke to go and tell his uncle. The regent still hesitated; I urged him, and carried the point. He called to the Duc de Noailles, and, going nearer to the company, he made the announcement.

Reception and result of the news of this appointment.

The news resounded immediately in the Palais-Royal, and by evening throughout all Paris. The next day every one knew it, and the joy and plaudits seemed to be universal; but the grief and wrath of the opposite party, once so large and so triumphant, now reduced in numbers and credit, were extreme. The thanks of the cardinal, which he offered to the regent on the following day, concluded the matter. It was high time. The request of the pope was already determined upon. He changed his letter to complaints, but they were mild. The regent replied more mildly still, but with firmness as to the matter itself, mingled with many compliments and much respect. The power of temporal interests over matters ecclesiastical was then seen plainly; and very transparent was the thin gauze of that mantle of religion which covers so much ambition, so many cabals, intrigues, and infamies. The "good cause" on which under the late king faith and religion itself seemed to depend, — that of the bull which had obscured the gospel and made it of little account in comparison with itself (and what I say is not exaggerated), — that "cause" changed all of a sudden in its relation to the party of unbelievers, rebels, schismatics, proscribed and exiled heretics, whose noblest heads were dispersed and banished or cast into prisons and dungeons without any tribunal taking cognizance of their cases, or any relief such as justice and humanity vainly demanded for them. This one great stroke of the return of Cardinal de Noailles and his friends to power on the death of the king cast down their enemies, sufficed to write upon their foreheads the ignominy of their ambition, their plots, their violence; it revealed their bull as the opprobrium of religion, the enemy of true doctrine, of Holy Writ, of the Fathers, and their "cause" as odious and dangerous to religion and the State.

Twenty-four hours sufficed for this great change; fifteen days completed it. Grass had grown in the archbishop's courtyard; no one ventured there, save a few trembling Nicodemuses in terror of the synagogue. In a moment, men turned that way; in the next they rushed there. All the bishops who had prostituted themselves to the king, all the priests of the second class, who had thrust themselves forward to make their way, all the people of the world who had been most eager to ingratiate themselves by supporting the ecclesiastical dictators, were not ashamed to swell the court of Cardinal de Noailles; and there were even some who were impudent enough to endeavour to make him believe they had always loved and respected him, and that their conduct was innocent. He himself was ashamed for them. He received them all like a true father; showed no coldness to any but those whose duplicity was manifest; and even to them no bitterness or complaint. He was little moved, in fact, by the sudden change, which he regarded as the pledge of another should the favour now shown to him cease.

Reflections.

The complete prostration of his enemies was incredible. It showed that they had nothing to rely on but an arm of flesh; of which they were so well convinced that after their first bewilderment the most rabid of them gathered together once more, trying to conjure the storm and to return in time to the place whence they had fallen, by the same intrigues which had put them there in the first instance. God, who tests his people, whose reign is not of this world, for which our Lord declared he did not pray, was pleased to bring the plots of that same world to an end, although the smiling prospect had but short duration.

Formation of the Council of Regency.

All the other councils being chosen, it was necessary to come to that of the Regency, the formation of which was far more difficult. It ought to have been composed of few members, to make it the more august, but there were several personages openly inimical to the Duc d'Orléans, or suspected of being so, whose station did not allow of their being excluded. These were the Duc du Maine, the Comte de Toulouse, Maréchal Villeroy, Maréchal d'Harcourt (who had refused the place offered to him as head of the council of the interior), and Chancellor Voysin, to whom the Duc d'Orléans had made the enormous mistake of promising that he should keep the Seals. Toulouse and Harcourt were only suspected, but very much so, — the former from his position and through his brother, different as he was from him; the latter because of his former intimacy with Mme. de Maintenon and the Princesse des Ursins. The others were open enemies. It was therefore necessary to counterbalance them by persons who were sure for the regent and also of a character and station to make them listened to in the Council, to which all matters within and without the kingdom were reported by the other councils and decided, in the last resort, by plurality of votes. It was necessary also to take into consideration that the opinion of M. le Duc, though at present it had little weight, would grow weightier with age, and might, through self-interest and cabals, be readily turned against the regent.

The fatal pliancy of the Duc d'Orleans was such in this matter of great importance that he yielded to the persuasions of Maréchal de Besons to change him from the council of war, where the good-nature of the regent had placed him, to the Council of Regency. Besons was a rough boor, who had run away from his father when he wanted to put him in the Church, to enlist among the troops sent clandestinely to Portugal, where he carried a musket. Being recognized by emissaries from his father, he was soon made an officer and served with diligence. This, with the Latin he knew before he enlisted, was all the education he ever had. He was a good general officer; knew very well how to lead a cavalry wing, and understood certain details; though his boorishness and high temper hindered him quite often from seeing and comprehending as he should have done. Anything more than this was beyond his capacity, as was proved more than once when, by chance, he had an army to command. With a temper that was intolerable and very little intelligence, he was personally brave and knew what honour was; but he was also awkward in every way, extremely cautious towards every one, with a great passion for being and having; very coarse and very dull, though not lacking in a certain petty spirit of short intrigue, in which he showed judgment. He had the head of a lion, very large with flopping lips, incased in a huge wig that would have made a good study for Rembrandt; and this head, seeming to be of one piece with his body, was thought by fools to be a sound one. He was not a personage to pit against any one in a Council of Regency. The Duc d'Orléans let me see he was ashamed of the promise he had given; as for me, I was much annoyed to find myself harnessed with such a man.

Another man whom the regent put into the Council of Regency, about whom he was much embarrassed to inform me and only let me know it by degrees, was Torcy, to the amazement of all France. He had always been allied with those who were most opposed to the Duc d'Orléans, if we except the latter's two worst enemies, Mme. de Maintenon and the Duc du Maine. The Duc d'Orléans had had many reasons to complain of him, and until after the death of the king neither he nor his wife had held any intercourse with him. I myself was strongly persuaded of Torcy's opposition to the Duc d'Orléans. I was prejudiced against him, I admit it frankly, by the sentiments the Ducs de Chevreuse and de Beauvilliers cherished against him, although their reasons for this aversion related only to the affairs of Rome. I had never had with Torcy and his wife anything more than a slight acquaintance, far less any intimacy; and (if truth requires that nothing should be hidden), as they had only the best and most select company at their house, my vanity was not pleased at never receiving the slightest advance on their part. Torcy was, moreover, a man of the old ministry, and, in my desire to do away with the secretaries of State and their power, he was not, of course, to my mind. I had often urged the Duc d'Orléans to exclude him, and though he would never answer me on that point as clearly as I wished, I still hoped for his exclusion, and was working for it when the regent let me see I need not count upon him. I redoubled my efforts, until at last he owned to me, with great embarrassment, that he thought him necessary, in order to obtain the secrets of foreign affairs during the many years Torcy had been the minister of them, and also the secrets of the post-office, which he could not do without. This was really what led him to retaining Torcy. It will be seen in the end how fully I recognized my error, and the close intimacy which esteem, that I shall venture to call mutual, produced between Torcy and myself, which has lasted until this present time, namely, March, 1746.

The Duc d'Orléans had always intended to put a bishop into the Council of Regency. I thought myself that he could do without one. My opinion was that of the late king, and, I believe, that of every sensible man, especially during the fire of the Unigenitus. The interests of the late Archbishop of Cambrai, urged upon me by the immense influence of the Duc de Beauvilliers, had kept me from opposing that desire, so that after the death of those two personages I had no time to do so successfully. I sought therefore for the least bad and most hopeful choice that could be made; and I proposed to the Duc d'Orléans the former Bishop of Troyes.

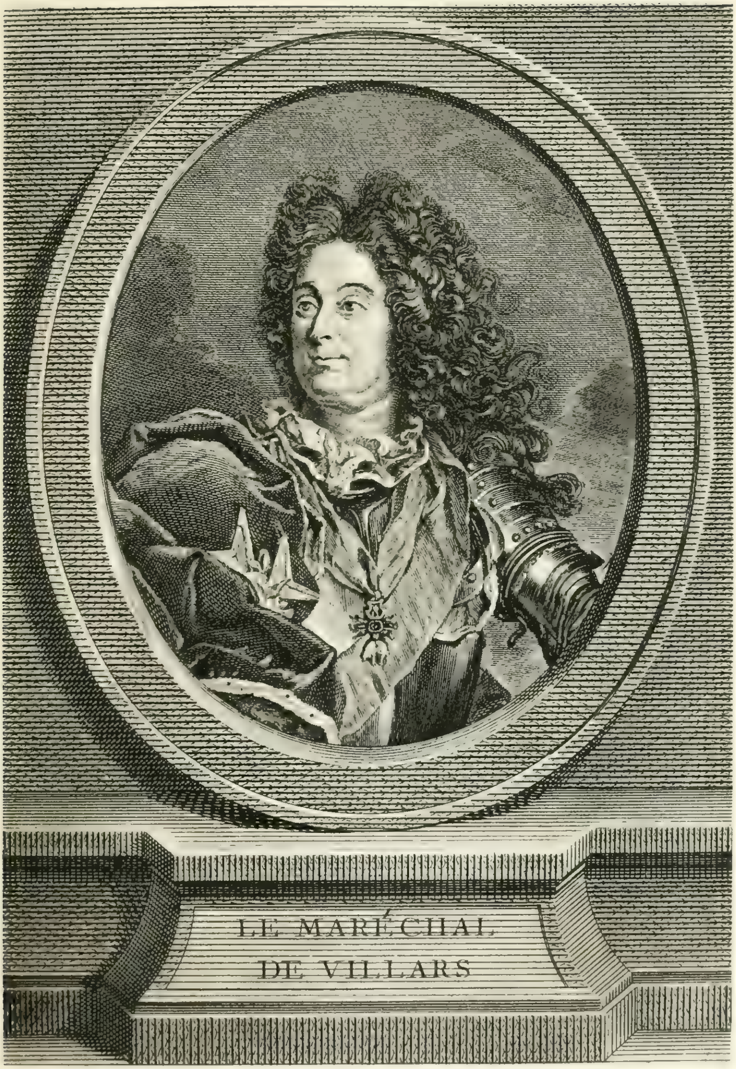
We have seen who and what he was at the beginning of these Memoirs, where I enlarged upon him on the occasion of his retirement from the world. At the age I then was, I had scarcely more than seen his face and had never known him personally; but from what I heard then he now seemed to me expressly made for the Council of Regency; I felt that here was a prelate profoundly wise as to the temporal affairs of the clergy, versed in those of Rome, withal a Frenchman, and possessing enough ecclesiastical learning. This was his reputation. He had moreover spent his life until his retirement in the great world of the Court and city; welcomed in the best and most important circles; a friend of most of the great personages and of the principal women of his time, with whom he had mingled in many matters. This great knowledge of the world was a great point. He was a bishop without a diocese, who thought of nothing so little as of coming back to the surface. At Troyes he saw no one and lived with his nephew; when the nephew visited Paris he moved to a room in the monastery of Troyes, where he also saw no one but the monks and was assiduous at their services. He also passed all Lents and Advents with them.

Such a life, grafted on one of the great world solely by choice, and so well sustained, seemed to me calculated to have much weight in restraining the license of the life of the regent. He had, moreover, no connection whatever with any cabal. All these things led me to believe he was expressly fitted for the place, inasmuch as a bishop was thought to be needful. The Duc d'Orléans approved the choice and made it. Nothing was ever more applauded. The bishop was sent for; he arrived, and he accepted, without affectation. The world, which nearly always expects more of good people than is fair, would have liked him to hold back, or even to refuse altogether. The beginnings were admirable. He attended only to his necessary duties. I congratulated myself on having thought of him. But all these marvels were of short duration; I was as much mistaken about him as I was about Torcy, but in the opposite direction. It is not yet time, however, to talk of that.

The Council of Regency was, when completed, composed of the following members, in their order of precedence: M. le Duc d'Orléans, M. le Duc, the Duc du Maine, the Comte de Toulouse, Voysin, chancellor, myself, since I must name myself, the Maréchals de Villeroy, d'Harcourt, and de Besons, the former Bishop of Troyes, and Torcy; with La Vrillière to keep the records, and Pontchartrain, — the two latter without votes. Those who came to report from the other councils were: the Archbishop of Bordeaux from the council of conscience, a man who had never been subjected by the promoters of the bull; the Maréchals de Villars, d'Estrées, and d'Huxelles, from the councils of war, navy, and foreign affairs; the Ducs de Noailles and d'Antin from those of the finances and the interior. We can now see on whom and on how much the regent could count as friends, enemies, and neutrals. It resulted, however, in the Council being almost always tranquil, and the regent left master of everything.

Villars, second maréchal of France, the most completely lucky of all the millions of men born under the long reign of Louis XIV., was made chief of the council of war, because in his brilliant position it could not be otherwise as soon as Villeroy, the senior maréchal, left the way open to him by his own selection as head of the council of finance, besides his other employments named in the king's will. We have seen his character already, and the reasons why Mme. Scarron, on becoming Mme. de Maintenon, never failed to protect him. His mother, a tiny, shrivelled old woman, all mind and no body, who had lately died at eighty-six years of age, was the most surprised person of all at the amazing good fortune of her son. She was spicy, amusing, and malicious, with a fund of incomparably pithy sayings, lightly as they seemed to touch. Although she tried to conceal it, the little that she thought of her son was quite apparent; she always advised him to talk much of himself to the king only, never to others. But none of the heads of the councils who reported to the Council of Regency (except d'Antin, who excelled in doing so), were more fit for the work than Villars. I will give an instance concerning the maréchal himself, which will show how much the public business suffered in consequence.

Villars, who wrote such a villanous hand that no one could read it, came to the Council of Regency with a ruling of the council of war in forty or fifty articles, relating to rations, forage, magazines, the marching of troops about the kingdom, with other details. He read the document article by article, on which each member of the Council gave his opinion, making changes in several, which Villars wrote down on the margin. When the reading was finished, the regent told the maréchal to read over each article with the notes he had just appended, to see if all was clear, and whether it was necessary to add or to change. Villars, who was next to me, read out the first article, but when it came



LE MARÉCHAL
DE VILLARS

to his notes he looked at them this way and that, turning in vain to the light, and finally asked me to look and see if I could make out what they meant. I laughed, and asked him if he thought I could do better than himself at his own writing, which he had just that moment written. Everybody laughed; at which he was not in the least embarrassed. He proposed to send for his secretary, who was, he said, in the antechamber, and knew how to read his writing, because he was accustomed to it. The regent said that that could not be allowed; and we all looked at each other, laughing, and not knowing how to get out of the difficulty. Finally, the regent said there was nothing to do but begin all over again; and he ordered me to take a pen and write the notes and opinions as each one gave them; which doubled, of course, the length of the affair. It is true it was only time ridiculously lost; but the evil was much greater when the reports themselves came in, so long and so badly prepared that none of us could fully understand them, and, consequently, we could not wisely decide the matters they concerned.

Outbreak of the princes of the blood against the claims of the Duc du Maine.

The Duc d'Orléans was scarcely through the first embarrassments in which he had allowed himself to be placed when another, of importance, arose. I shall merely note here the epoch of its beginning, because its consequences are not of the present moment. The suit as to the inheritance of M. le Prince was still going on. In an affidavit which the Duc du Maine was called upon to make he assumed the quality of prince of the blood, as he was authorized to do by the declaration of the late king, registered by parliament, which gave it to him, and permitted him to use it in all deeds and otherwise, both him and his children, and also the Comte de Toulouse. Mme. la Duchesse and M. le Duc, who had never dared breathe a word while the late king lived, made a great disturbance and declared that, whatever protection the Duc du Maine assumed to draw from that declaration, it gave him no right to qualify as prince of the blood with the true princes of the blood, or to take any judicial or legal action as such in a suit with them. They drew in the Princesse de Conti and her son to make common cause with them in this question, although the latter were united with M. and Mme. du Maine by community of interest in the suit against M. le Duc for the inheritance of M. le Prince. The uproar was great; the regent tried to pacify it; we shall see the results hereafter.

The Duchesse de Berry lodged at the Luxembourg.

The Duchesse de Berry now established herself in the Luxembourg with her little Court. An effort was made to lodge us there conveniently, Mme. de Saint-Simon, and myself; but Mme. de Saint-Simon, who had never been able honourably to quit the Duchesse de Berry, seized this occasion to live as much apart from her as was possible. No place was found in the Luxembourg where we could be comfortably lodged together and we therefore continued to live in our own house in Paris. The Duchesse de Berry insisted, however, that Mme. de Saint-Simon should have a lodging at the Luxembourg; but she did not furnish it or even set foot in it. She never went to the Duchesse de Berry in the mornings, unless there were audiences or some ceremony, but usually in the evenings, at the hour for cards, when ladies were not required to present themselves in full dress, and were often retained to sup with the Duchesse de Berry. Mme. de Saint-Simon almost never supped there. We had company every day to dinner and supper, as for years we had usually had. Very rarely she attended the duchess on her drives and visits, unless when she went to the king or to the theatre. Mme. de Saint-Simon was firm in maintaining this freedom, and with great and just reason, but she was treated invariably with the utmost consideration. When the duchess was at Saint-Cloud she always stayed with her, because she could not do otherwise. As for me, I behaved as usual. I never went more than twice a year to the Duchesse de Berry, for a moment each time, being always extremely well received. The motives for this conduct have been seen elsewhere.

First Council of Regency.

On Monday, September 28, the first Council of Regency was held after dinner at Vincennes in the grand cabinet of the king; and on this occasion the heads and presidents of all the other councils were allowed to be present. It was ruled that the Council should have four sittings a week, namely: Saturday, after dinner; Sunday morning; Tuesday, after dinner; and Wednesday morning; that the members should consider themselves notified once for all of those four meetings; but notice should be given of all extra meetings if the regent called them. It was also ruled on what days the head or president of each of the other councils should report its affairs; that he should leave as soon as he had finished, whether the Council rose or not; and that all heads and presidents of councils should be summoned for extraordinary business whenever the regent thought proper. This first Council was chiefly passed in balloting; it was not until the next meeting that it took up serious work, which then related to affairs of State.

The council of finances had found its matters in a strange state. For one thing, there were due over sixteen hundred thousand francs to our ambassadors and those whom the late king had kept at foreign Courts; most of whom had literally not enough money to pay the postage on their letters, having spent all they had; this was a cruel discredit to us throughout all Europe. The financiers, however, had made their profit out of them to get all they wanted. Noailles and Rouillé of the council of finances proposed to scrutinize their proceedings, which so terrified them that Plénœuf, for one, disappeared and escaped into Italy. It would require a great knowledge of finances, a vast and correct memory, and whole volumes devoted solely to this matter to explain what was tried, abandoned, and accomplished in relation to it. This is a work beyond my powers and my tastes. I shall content myself with noting down the principal events in this line, leaving others more capable than myself to treat them fundamentally.

Novelties at Court.

Singular novelties were now seen at Court, which soon produced others that were still more strange. Nothing could equal the pride of the Duchesse de Berry, as I have said and shown elsewhere, and her empire over the mind of the Duc d'Orléans continued the same, however undeserved. She took it into her head to want a captain of the guards. No daughter of France had ever had one. It was an honour unknown even to queen-mothers and queen-regents, until the last, the mother of Louis XIV., who had one. Madame had never dreamed of one. At first the Duc d'Orléans resisted this fancy, but he soon yielded, though he ruled that Madame should have one too, as her rank was the same as that of the Duchesse de Berry. He engaged to pay the cost of the latter because Madame, whose household was large and her revenues not at all so, did not wish for such expense; in fact she would not have a company of guards, but continued to use those of the Duc d'Orléans. The Duchesse de Berry had very few guards, but she now set up a company, the lieutenancy of which she gave to Rion. I mention this trifling detail, because there will be some mention of Rion later on, and this was the first time anybody ever heard of him.

The perpetual jaunts and parties of the Duchesse de Berry, either alone or with the Duchesse de Bourgogne at the beginning of her marriage, had obliged Mme. de Saint-Simon to ask for some relief in attending her, and the king had allowed her to propose to the duchess four ladies-in-waiting. In France vanity is contagious and spreads rapidly. The Duchesse d'Orléans, now wife of the regent, profited by that position to amalgamate herself (at least in this respect) with the daughters of France, and the Duc d'Orléans was not a man to refuse her, though he cared nothing himself for the distinction. So she, too, obtained four ladies.

Mme. la Duchesse, who had never been reconciled to seeing her younger sister raised so much above herself, could not long endure that the Duchesse d'Orleans should have ladies-in-waiting without having them herself. She found her commodities of this kind rather mixed, but among them were women who for their bread and their amusement desired nothing better. The pliancy of the Duc d'Orléans made him permit it, as he did other things; after which, the remaining princesses of the blood had what they pleased.

II.

The Scotch project.

The late king had returned to his natural inclinations and his former principles about England after the death of Queen Anne and the overthrow of all the persons who had her confidence and formed her council. The king, her successor, had replaced those in office whom she had displaced; the Whigs were in power and the Tories dismissed. Such changes cannot be executed, either in a government or in a nation naturally inclined to factions, without producing a great number of malcontents of all kinds; and all the more in this case because the new ministers and favourites breathed vengeance against those who had driven them out and taken their places during the last reign, and were determined to pursue and bring to trial those who had been most instrumental in making the peace, — to whom, therefore, France was under much obligation. Scotland could not console itself for becoming a mere province of England. The Duke of Ormond was hiding in Paris, while awaiting what the Earl of Mar could do in Scotland, where the party were stirring; and the Pretender (to use the received term) was at Bar, waiting for some, not apparent, conjunction to cross the channel, certain of the protection of Louis XIV., and probably of that of the King of Spain.

The death of the king, who entered secretly but with all his heart into this project, which might soon have been favoured by Sweden and Russia, who were both anxious to end their war by a treaty of peace in this direction, disconcerted the Pretender's plan. The minority of the young king, with the interior of France left in the condition it was on the death of Louis XIV., was not the time for France to risk a rupture with England without being well assured of that which it was difficult to make sure of; I mean a sudden and complete revolution, such as that which placed King William on the throne of his uncle and father-in-law. The late king had, as we have seen, left the throne of Philippe V. firmly secured, the union of the two crowns perfect, and both countries enjoying a peace with all Europe by the treaties of Utrecht and Baden. The regent was absolutely determined to preserve so necessary a blessing.

The Earl of Stair.

Other circumstances kept him from lending himself to the project of the late king in favour of the Pretender. The Earl of Stair had been sent to France by King George about a year before the death of the king, but without using his commission as ambassador, which he kept in his pocket. He was a very simple Scottish gentleman, tall, well-made, slender, still quite young, holding his head high with a proud air. He had intellect, cleverness and craft; active withal, well-informed, secretive, master of himself and his face, speaking readily in all characters as he judged them suitable. Under pretext of loving society, good living, and debauchery (which he never pushed far), he made acquaintances and procured intimacies which he put to use in serving his master and his own party also. His party was that of the Whigs and of all those whom King George had restored to power, and also of the family and friends of the Duke of Marlborough, whose creature he was, under whom he had served and who had procured him a regiment and the Scottish Order.

Stair had seen from afar the threatening failure of the king's health. He perceived plainly that he had nothing to hope from the authority of the Duc du Maine, which, if it prevailed, would follow the maxims and intentions of the king. He therefore felt very early that the only part to take was that of the Duc d'Orléans who had the right on his side, to flatter him with assurances of his master's support if there were need to recognize his regency and the authority it conveyed, to enroll him, so to speak, early with King George by offers made in a period of doubt, by persuading him that their interests were the same, and (to tell it frankly, for Stair was not afraid to let the actual phrase escape him) by suggesting the thought that two usurpers, such close neighbours, were bound to support each other mutually, through and against all; for both were in the same case, King George with regard to the Pretender, the Duc d'Orléans under the renunciations of the King of Spain, if so weak and young a child as the successor of Louis XIV., should fail.

Stair urges the regent to arrest the Pretender.

The troubles of England were increasing, and the Earl of Mar had successes in Scotland. Stair was wholly occupied in preventing France from giving any help to the Pretender and in stopping his passage across the kingdom if he tried to gain the shores of the channel. He had good spies; and before long he heard that the prince was preparing to leave Bar, on which he rushed to the regent, demanding to have him arrested. Having reason to think that the regent was trying to gain time to see what would happen in England, he let his Royal Highness know that if he looked at these troubles with indifference England would do the same for whatever might come in France. These were the terms on which they were when, suddenly, the Pretender disappeared from Bar, and Stair again came crying to the Duc d'Orléans to stop his way through France and arrest him.

The regent, who was cleverly swimming between two currents, had promised the Pretender to shut his eyes, and so far favour the project, provided the move was made in the utmost secrecy. At the same time, he granted Stair's request, and immediately despatched Contade, who was devoted to him and very intelligent, the major of a regiment of guards, with orders to take his brother, a lieutenant in the same regiment and two sergeants of his own choice, and go to Château-Thierry, where Stair had positive knowledge the Pretender was to pass. Contade started on the night of the 9th of November, fully determined, and instructed, to miss finding his man. Stair, who was only outwardly trustful, took other measures, which came very near succeeding; and this is what happened.

The Pretender escapes the assassins of Stair.

The Pretender started disguised from Bar, accompanied by three or four persons only, and came to Chaillot, where the Duc de Lauzun had a little old house that he did not occupy. It was there the Pretender slept and saw his mother, the queen, who was staying as she often did with the Filles de Sainte-Marie at Chaillot. From there he started, in Torcy's post-chaise, along the road to Alençon to embark from Bretagne.

Stair discovered this proceeding, and resolved to neglect nothing to deliver his party once for all from this last remnant of the Stuarts. He despatched men silently along the different routes, giving that from Paris to Alençon to Colonel Douglas, a half-pay officer in an Irish regiment in the French service, who, by reason of his name, his intelligence, his energy, and his intrigue, had insinuated himself in Paris. He was on a footing of consideration and familiarity with the regent and often came to my house; he lived in the best company, had married on the frontier of Metz, was very poor, with much politeness, knowledge of the world, a reputation of great valour, and nothing about him to make any one suspect that he was capable of crime.

Douglas put himself into a post-chaise with two valets and another man on horseback, all four armed to the teeth, and started slowly along the route to Alençon. Nonancourt is a little town about nineteen leagues from Paris on that road. Here he stopped, asked for something to eat at the post-inn, and inquired with great care about a post-chaise, which he described, together with those who escorted it, expressing fears lest it had passed and that the people of the inn were deceiving him. The master of the post-inn was named Lospital. He was absent; but his wife was there, who was, luckily, a very worthy woman, of intelligence, good sense, brains, and courage. Nonancourt is only five leagues from La Ferté; I therefore knew this post-mistress very well, and she has herself told me this whole adventure more than once. She tried in vain to get some light on the matter, which made her uneasy. All she could discover was that they were English and concerned in some violent action; that their object, whatever it was, was important, and that they were planning some evil deed. She imagined that it related to the Pretender, and she resolved to save him; arranging a plan in her head, which she was happily able to execute.

In order to succeed she did all the two gentlemen wanted, and made them feel so secure of being duly warned that Douglas went off somewhere along the road, taking one valet with him. The other remained with the second gentleman on watch at the inn. She then made her plan. She asked the gentleman to drink, and gave him her best wine and kept him at table as long as she could, sending meantime a faithful servant to watch for the post-chaise; her intention being to keep the man and the valet shut in, and to relay the chaise at the back of the house, where she kept her horses ready. But the chaise did not come, and the man got tired of sitting at table. She then persuaded him to lie down in one of the chambers and rely upon her and his valet to call him as soon as the chaise appeared. After which she slipped off to a friend in a side street, told her her adventure and suspicions, and made her promise to receive the person she wanted to hide. She then sent for a priest, her relation, told him the story, and borrowed an abbé's suit and a priest's wig. That done, she went home, found the English valet watching on the steps, pitied his ennui, told him how good he was to be so faithful, gave him something to drink, and then by the help of a trusty hostler made him so drunk that he went to sleep under the table. Meantime she had turned the key gently on the English gentleman who was sleeping upstairs.

Half an hour later the faithful man she had on the watch announced that the chaise was coming. Mme. Lospital went to meet it; in it was King James; she told him he was expected and would be lost if he did not take care; but he must trust to her and follow her; and in a minute she had him at her friend's house. There he heard what had happened, and they hid him as best they could with his three companions. After which Mme. Lospital returned home and sent for the officers of the law, to whom she told her suspicions of evil-dealing, and made them arrest the drunken valet and the gentleman who was asleep in the chamber. Then she despatched one of the postilions back to Torcy. Meantime the law proceeded, and a copy of the *procès-verbal* was sent to Court. Nothing can describe the rage of the English gentleman and his fury against the valet for getting drunk. As for Mme. Lospital, he would have strangled her if he could, and she was long in terror of some ill-turn. King James remained three days at Nonancourt to let the noise die out, and then, dressed as an abbé, he continued his journey in another post-chaise and embarked in Bretagne for Scotland.

Douglas returned to Paris, where the Earl of Stair made a great to-do about the Nonancourt adventure, which he treated with extreme audacity and impudence, as an attack against the rights of individuals. Douglas, who could not be ignorant of what was said of him, had the equal audacity to go wherever he was accustomed, to the theatres, and even to present himself before the regent. Many persons closed their doors to him. He tried in vain to force mine, and even dared to complain to me about it. Soon after he disappeared from Paris, and I never knew what became of him.

The Queen of England sent for Mme. Lospital to come to Saint-Germain, where she thanked her, caressed her as she deserved, gave her her portrait, and that was all. The regent did nothing for her. Long afterwards King James wrote to her, and sent her his portrait. Such is the indigence of dethroned kings, and their perfect forgetfulness of great perils and signal services.

Balls at the Opera.

The Chevalier de Bouillon, who, since the death of the son of the Comte d'Auvergne, had taken the title of Prince d'Auvergne, proposed to the regent to establish public balls at the Opera, masked or not masked, where the boxes would give every convenience to see the ball to those who did not wish to go upon the floor. It was thought that a public ball, guarded as the Opera is whenever open, would be safe from adventures, and would put a stop to the discreditable little balls all over Paris, where so many scandals happened. Those at the Opera were therefore established, with a grand concourse of people, and all the effect that had been proposed. The master of ceremonies had a salary of over six thousand francs, and a mechanism was admirably invented and very easily and rapidly worked to cover the orchestra, and floor the stage and the parterre at the same level. Unfortunately, the Opera was at the Palais-Royal, and the Duc d'Orléans had only a step to go on leaving his suppers, so that he often showed himself at these balls in a very unsuitable condition. The Duc de Noailles, who was forever trying to pay court to him, was among the first to go so drunk that there was no indecency he did not commit there.

Reasons for keeping the Court at Versailles.

The Duc d'Orléans was very much bored at Vincennes; he wanted to have the king in Paris. I had done what I could to induce a return to Versailles. We were there, alone with the Court, away from the sort of world that never sleeps out of Paris, unless it goes to the country. Those who had business to attend to could find in an hour the persons they had to see; whereas in Paris one had to go ten times and into all quarters of the city. Moreover, no one could have at Versailles the dissipation and loss of time to be found in Paris. But what I considered as more important still was the distance from the tumult of parliament, the markets, the vulgar life, and the adventures of a minority, such as Louis XIV. had met with, and which drove him furtively out of Paris on that eve of the Epiphany. I was spurred also to get the Duc d'Orléans away from the pernicious company with whom he supped every evening, and from the state in which he showed himself at the Opera-balls, and his fatal loss of time at the theatres. But all this was precisely what attached him to a residence in Paris, from which I soon saw there was no way to drag him. He even made the doctors have a grand consultation about bringing the king to Paris from Vincennes; but the Court doctors and those of Paris were agreed in this case, and declared that he ought not to be brought there till the first frosts had purified the air and extinguished a great deal of small-pox of very dangerous type, which then prevailed in the city.

It was, therefore, not until Monday, December 30, that the king left Vincennes, after his dinner, to come to Paris. The men charged with his education had already begun at Vincennes, where they had lodgings, to take care of themselves. At the Tuileries the Maréchal de Villeroy had a fine apartment, and presently took that of the queen adjoining those of the king, and the Duc du Maine had the beautiful rooms of the dauphins on the lower floor. M. de Fréjus had one above; the sub-governors also. The city harangued the king on his arrival, and he found a great crowd in his apartment. Thus ended the year 1715.

1716.

I wish to retire from Court after the death of the king.

I had felt the supineness of the Duc d'Orléans at the death of the king, not only in what concerned himself personally, but in many other matters, and I wanted to retire once for all. I had therefore withdrawn to my own house and did not leave it. The Duc d'Orléans was troubled by this; he wanted me not to be vexed, but without intending himself to do better. He sent the Abbé Dubois to me again and again, to conjure me to return to him, and not abandon him in this first crisis, to trust entirely to his friendship, his confidence, his gratitude, — in short, the finest messages in the world. I had great difficulty in letting myself — not be persuaded, but simply — yield to what was proper. He himself said stronger things to me personally, so that, in spite of myself, I was pledged again. This was before the formation of the councils. I was not long in perceiving something worse than supineness.

The regent deceived about the parliament.

Parliament, led by d'Effiat and Canillac, prompted by the Duc de Noailles and supported by the Duc du Maine and the numerous group he had united with him under the respectable name of "noblesse," began now to show its teeth to the regent, to fail to answer him, or even to obey him. It was not afraid to show scorn of a prince who treated it with timid caution produced by fears which it readily perceived. These magistrates, guided by such hands, soon understood that they could do all they wished and risk nothing; that the regent, who coaxed them cautiously to get them to pass the edicts and declarations he wanted to make on matters of finance and government, would never compromise himself with them on any matter which did not bear upon his personal wishes. It was in vain that I represented to his Royal Highness the public derision which the parliament made of his authority, and the danger of its resisting him hereafter about matters that would greatly embarrass him in carrying on the government, — and resisting him, too, whenever it pleased them so to do. What I told him was evident, and he was not long in meeting with a shameful experience of it; but now I talked in vain; I only made him despair at the excellence of my reasons, to which he could make no reply. His distrust persuaded him that I argued as a duke and peer, with that interest alone in view; his love for division, which he thought it well to keep up between the dukes and parliament and among the dukes themselves, and his weakness, increased by the pernicious counsels of Noailles, Besons, d'Effiat, Canillac, and others, all induced him to think he must manœuvre cautiously if he wanted parliament to be favourable to his measures. People were not long in perceiving that he made it his policy, as much in general things as in special things, to excite disputes; and soon a favourite saying frequently escaped him as an admirable maxim of practice: *Divide et regna.*

I was much surprised soon after the return from Vincennes to see the Duc du Maine enter my room. He covered his embarrassment by an easy air, and, with great politeness, talked to me as if we had never had anything between us, but without saying a word about the past. No man knew better than he how to lead a conversation and all sorts of talk. He used that talent now with all his graces, and neglected nothing that could please me, but without touching for a moment on anything that interested either of us. I was forced, on my part, to try to pay him in the same coin. Though the game was not equal, I got myself fairly well out of it, with enough fine language and politeness to score nothing against me. This lasted more than half an hour *tête-à-tête.* It was the morning for the Council of Regency, and not at all an hour for visits. This in itself seemed to me suspicious; and after he had gone I felt myself doubly relieved in being delivered, and in finding his action was simply a visit. I told the regent of it a moment before the council began, and we laughed together over the fears of a man who had counted him for so little but a short time ago, and me, as was natural, for infinitely less. The regent, however, exhorted me to return the visit, as M. du Maine had made the first advance, and to show less stiffness and avoidance in my manner in those places where it was necessary we should meet. However reasonable that counsel was, it cost me dear to follow it after all that had happened. I have never been false; and it seemed to me falseness to live with the Duc du Maine as I would with a man to whom I was indifferent. Nevertheless I yielded as much as I could to the demands of propriety — with rather bad grace, I believe, always avoiding as

M. du Maine makes me a visit without any cause for it.

much as I could getting within reach of his conversation, and greatly annoyed by the prostitution of his bows and allurements, by which he constantly tried to please and win me.

I return it and hear very singular but very polite remarks.

I chose the end of a morning to return his visit, in order to have a safe pretext not to see Mme. du Maine. I gained nothing by that. I was received with eagerness and even with thanks. As I prepared to take leave after making a very short visit, he said that Mme. la Duchesse du Maine would never forgive him if he let me go without seeing her. No matter what I said and did, he took me to her in spite of myself, and put me in a chair by her bedside. Her greeting was the same as his; for the wife could do with herself and her tongue exactly what she pleased, and with no less grace and politeness, when she chose, than her husband. I rose to take leave; they both cried out that it was such a pleasure to them to see me that I must stay longer. And then, immediately, as if they feared to miss their chance, she began to speak of the quarrel between M. le Duc and themselves. I tried to avoid entering on the matter, but she forced me to do so by questions, gently pushed on by the Duc du Maine, so that I presently found myself on the witness stand, attentively looked at and listened to by a little group of men who were present. I finally got out of it by saying that M. du Maine (and consequently she herself) was well aware of what I thought on the subject, for I had more than once told him of it.

I hoped to cut her short with this answer, which told all and explained nothing. But Mme. du Maine was not satisfied. After joking M. du Maine for not telling her everything, she asked me to speak more plainly. This made me inwardly angry. I then said that if she absolutely insisted on again hearing what I thought, I would obey her, provided she would be good enough to remember that she commanded me to do so. And thereupon I told her that I was quite content they should be princes of the blood with succession to the throne, because with that the peers had no dispute; that as long as they held that position we had nothing to say against it; but they must be careful to maintain it; because if they lost it we, the peers, would never permit an intermediary rank; we should then do all that was possible to prevent them from standing between the princes of the blood and ourselves. They both, not seeing farther than their own thoughts, said I was right, and they had no reason to complain if we were satisfied with their present position. "But," added Mme. du Maine, "will you not excite the princes of the blood against us?" "Madame," I replied, "it is not our affair; it is that of the princes of the blood, who do not want our advice, and have never asked for it." I rung the changes thus on this delicate question. They were satisfied with what I said, because they wanted to be, and I was still more satisfied at having got out of the matter without being tripped up either way.

After that wherever I met him the Duc du Maine was surpassingly polite, and I put the best face forward that I could, which, to tell the truth, was not too good a one, and always with great reserve, — never addressing, almost never approaching him, and avoiding, as much as I decently could, allowing him to join me.

I was not upon this tone with the Comte de Toulouse. He, as I have said elsewhere, was a very true and very worthy man. He had taken no part in the grandeurs which his brother had piled one upon another, like a Titan, to scale the skies. His manner of giving his opinion in Council, of seeking the good for good's sake, and right for the right's sake, had won me. I often saw him at the Duchesse d'Orléans', and I lived with him in perfect openness, and he with me; which had come about reciprocally on both sides, without, however, leading to the confidences of intimate friendship, and without meeting at each other's houses; but elsewhere every day, and always speaking very freely. My seat was next to his at the Council, where we talked freely, and sometimes *tête-à-tête* before and after the session.

The Abbé Dubois counsellor of State for the Church.

The Abbé Dubois was very anxious to be counsellor of State for the Church, and he came to ask me to break the ice for him with the regent. My frankness could not be silent. I replied that I wished him all sorts of good, but as for that place I begged him to look behind him and see if it suited him; also to remember the vexation the other counsellors of State would feel; and to see whether his attachment to the Duc d'Orléans would allow him to bring down upon the regent the hatred of the whole Council and all the aspirants, and the spiteful offices which would certainly grow out of such a choice. He was rather surprised, but he had no real reply; and we did not fail to separate on very good terms. Four days later he returned. "I have come," he said, transported with joy, "to tell you I am counsellor of State." "My dear abbé," I replied, "I am delighted, and all the more that I have had no part in it; you are content and so am I. But take care of the consequences; since the thing is done, hold yourself steady, and watch, but without being afraid." I embraced him and he went off quite satisfied with me. I did not say a word to the regent, nor he to me. My custom was never to speak to him of things done that I disapproved; his never to tell me of those he had done when he knew they were done unwisely. The consequences were such as I foresaw. There was no one, from the chancellor to the lowest master of petitions, who did not feel himself personally affronted, and who did not show it. Neither they nor the other aspirants restrained their complaints or their remarks. The Abbé Dubois, who thought only of himself, had what he wanted, and cared nothing for the uproar, nor for his master.

The Duchesse de Berry usurps honours that she does not keep.

The Duchesse de Berry profited by her position to usurp all the honours of a queen, in spite of the remonstrances of Mme. de Saint-Simon, who assured her of the dislike that would follow such a course. She drove about Paris with drums beating, and along the whole length of the quay of the Tuileries where the king was living. The next day the Maréchal de Villeroy carried his complaints to the regent, who promised him that so long as the king was in Paris no other drums should be heard but his, and ever after the Duchesse de Berry had none. After that she went to the theatre with a dais over her box, four of her guards on the stage, others in the pit, the hall more lighted than usual, and received an harangue before the play from the comedians. This made a great uproar in Paris; so much so that she dared not go to the theatre again in the same way; but in order not to back down, she renounced going to the play at all, and took a little box at the Opera, where she was scarcely seen and as if incognito.

Abandons herself to Rion; who and what he was.

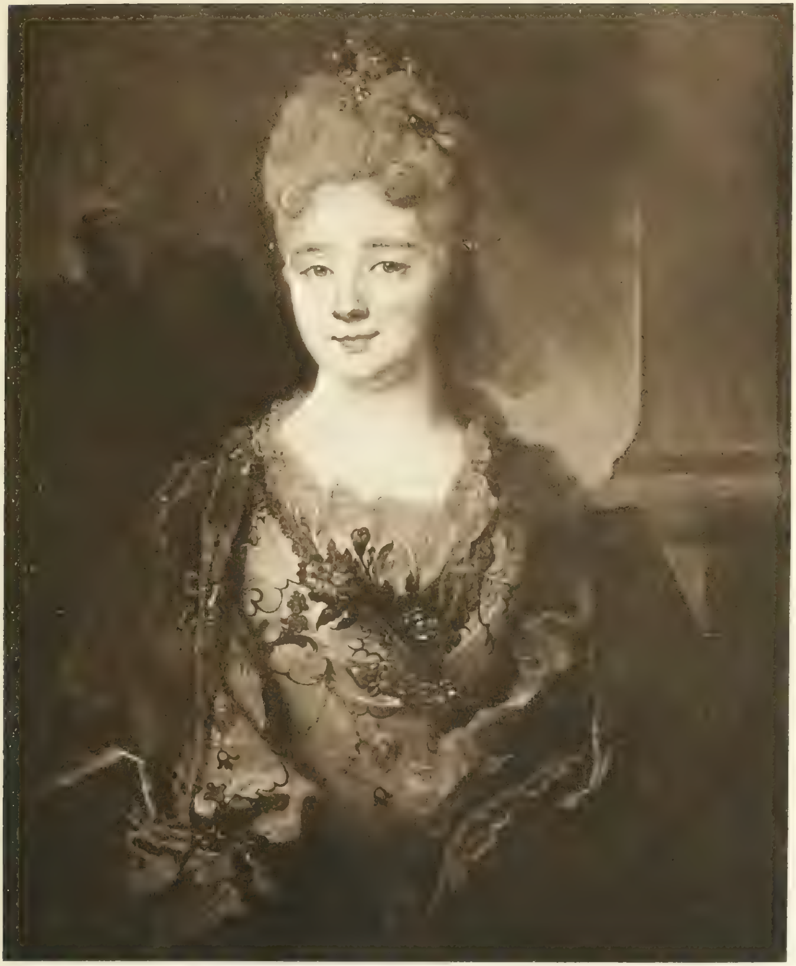
After many passing love-affairs, she became infatuated for good and all with Rion, a cadet of the house of Aydie, son of a sister of Mme. de Biron, who had neither figure nor mind. He was a short, stout, pale, and puffy lad, with many pimples on his face, which made it look like an abscess. He had fine teeth, but never imagined he could cause a passion which, in very little time, became frantic and lasted ever after, — without, however, hindering a few passing distractions and contrary loves.

He had not a sou, but a great many brothers and sisters, who had none either. M. and Mme. de Pons (lady-in-waiting to the Duchesse de Berry) were related to him; they brought him from the provinces, he being a lieutenant of dragoons, to try to make something of him. He had hardly arrived before the passion declared itself and he became the master of the Luxembourg. M. de Lauzun, whose great-nephew he was, laughed in his sleeve; he was enchanted, and fancied himself back in the Luxembourg in the days of Mademoiselle; and he gave his successor instructions.

Rion was gentle and naturally polite and respectful, a good and honest lad. He felt that the power of his charms could only captivate the incomprehensible, depraved fancy of a princess. He did not abuse his position with any one, and made everybody like him, but Mme. la Duchesse de Berry he treated as Lauzun had treated Mademoiselle. He was soon adorned with the finest laces and the richest clothes, and heaped with money, boxes, jewels, and precious stones. He made himself desired; he amused himself by exciting the jealousy of his princess, and seeming himself still more jealous, so that he often made her weep. Little by little he put her on the footing of never daring to do anything without his permission, not even the most indifferent things. Sometimes, when she was ready to go to the Opera, he made her stay at home; at other times he forced her to go where she did not wish, and to do kindnesses to ladies whom she hated and was jealous of, and incivilities to those she liked and of whom he pretended jealousy. Even in her dress she had no liberty. He diverted himself by making her pull down her hair or change her gown when she was all ready; and this so often, and sometimes so publicly, that he brought her at last to take his orders over night for her dress and her occupations the next day; but the next day he often changed everything, and the princess wept more than ever. Finally, she had come to sending him messages by trusty valets (for he lodged at the gate of the Luxembourg), and her messengers went several times during her toilet to ask what ribbon, or gown, or ornaments he wished her to wear, and he usually made her take those that she did not wish herself. If sometimes she dared to assert her freedom in a trifling way, he treated her like a servant, and the tears lasted several days. This haughty princess, who took such pleasure in showing and exercising her excessive pride, degraded herself by taking her meals with him and with other obscure men like himself; she, with whom no man but a prince of the blood had a right to eat!

A Jesuit, named Père Riglet, whom she had known as a child, and who ever since had cultivated her, was admitted to these private meals without being ashamed of it. Mme. de Mouchy was the confidant of these strange proceedings; she and Rion invited the guests and chose the days. La Mouchy frequently patched up the quarrels of the princess and her lover, who was also hers, though the princess did not dare to take notice of it for fear of losing a man so dear and a confidant so useful. The singular thing is that in the midst of this life she took an apartment at the Carmelite convent in the faubourg Saint-Germain, where she went sometimes in the afternoons, and always to sleep on festivals, sometimes remaining there several days. She took with her only two ladies; never any servants; she ate with her ladies what the convent served to her, attended all the daily services in the choir, and often those at night; and besides these services she continued long in prayer and fasted rigidly on the days of obligation.

Two Carmelite nuns, women of much intelligence who knew the world, were appointed to receive her and be con-



The Duchesse de Berry

stantly near her. One was very beautiful, the other had been. They were both quite young, especially the handsome one, but excellent nuns and saintly women, who performed this duty very reluctantly. When they became more familiar, they spoke frankly to the princess, telling her that if they knew nothing but what they saw they should admire her as a saint; but they knew in other ways that she led a strange life, and so publicly that they could not understand why she wanted to come and stay in their convent. The Duchesse de Berry laughed and was not displeased. Sometimes they lectured her, talked to her of people and things by their names, and exhorted her to change so scandalous a life; all of which she repeated afterwards among her ladies.

The Duchesse de Berry paid over to her father with usury the rough treatment and tyranny she bore from Rion, without his weakness allowing him to have less devotion, less compliance, or, it must be said, less submission and fear of her. He was miserable at the public reign of Rion and the scandal of his daughter's life, but he dared not say a word, and when at times some scene, both ridiculous and violent, between the princess and her lover came to the ears of the public, if the regent ventured to make some remonstrance he was treated like a negro, sulked at for several days, and not allowed to make his peace. There was never a day, however, that father and daughter did not see each other, and chiefly at the Luxembourg. It is time now to speak of the public and private occupations of the regent, of his conduct, his parties, and his daily life.

Daily life and personal conduct of the regent.

All his mornings were given up to public business, and each division of it had its regular days and hours. He began work alone, before dressing; received people at his *lever*, which was short, and was followed by audiences on which he wasted time. After that he received successively until two o'clock those who were more directly charged with the various matters of business, such as the heads of councils; Le Blanc (whom he used frequently for espionage); those with whom he worked on the Unigenitus affairs; those of the parliament; often Torcy about the post; sometimes Villeroy to paw the ground and make a show; once a week the foreign ministers; besides all this, he attended the councils, and mass in his chapel privately on feast-days and Sundays. At first he rose early, a habit which slackened, little by little, and grew tardy and uncertain, according to the hour when he went to bed. At half-past two he took his chocolate in public and talked with the company. He then returned to his cabinet and gave audiences to men and women; after which he went to the Duchesse d'Orléans, or the Council of Regency, and always to the king, whom he approached and addressed and quitted with bows and an air of respect, which pleased the little king and taught manners to those about him. After the Council, that is, about five o'clock, there was no further question of business. He went either to the Opera or the Luxembourg, or to the Duchesse d'Orléans, or out by the back way; or else he received his company by the same way. In summer he drove to Saint-Cloud and other country-places; if Madame was in Paris he saw her a moment before his mass, and when she was at Saint-Cloud he went to see her and always paid her great attention and respect.

His suppers were in very strange company, — that of his mistresses, sometimes an opera-girl, often the Duchesse de Berry and a dozen men, first one set, then others, whom he never called otherwise than his *roués*, together with certain ladies of medium virtue but belonging to the great world, and a few obscure persons, obscure as to name, but brilliant for their mind or their debauchery. The exquisite food served was cooked in places arranged for the purpose expressly on the same floor, and always with silver utensils; the company lending a hand quite often to the cooks. At these suppers everything and everybody was reviewed — ministers and favourites as much as the rest — with a freedom which was really unbridled license. Gallantries past and present of the Court, old gossip, disputes, jokes, sarcasms — no person and no thing was spared. The Duc d'Orléans held up his corner with the rest; but it is also true that it was very seldom indeed that any of these tales made the slightest impression upon him. The company drank, grew heated, and said vile things at the tops of their voices, rivalling one another in impious remarks, and when they had made a vast deal of noise and were dead drunk they went to bed and began it all over again the next day. The moment the hour came for these suppers to begin, all was so barricaded against the outside world that no affair could enter, and it was useless to try to reach the regent. I am not speaking only of private matters, but of those most vitally important to the State and his own person; and this embargo lasted till the next morning.

One thing was very extraordinary about the regent: neither his mistresses, nor the Duchesse de Berry, nor his *roués,* even in his drunken moments, ever learned anything from him, whether of much or of little importance, about the government and public matters. He lived openly with Mme. de Parabère, and was living at the same time with others; he amused himself with the jealousy and spite of these women; but he was none the less on good terms with all of them, and the scandal of this public harem, and that of the filth and impiety of his nightly suppers was extreme, and spread everywhere.

Religious enormities.

Lent had begun, and I foresaw a dreadful stigma or else a horrible sacrilege at Easter which would only increase the already terrible scandal. It was this that made me resolve to speak to the Duc d'Orléans, though I had long kept silence as to his debaucheries, having lost all hope about them. I told him, therefore, that the straits where Easter would place him seemed to me so terrible as regarded God, so grievous in regard to the world, which likes to do evil itself but thinks it bad in others, especially in its masters, that, against my resolutions, I could not abstain from representing to him the consequences. He listened patiently, and asked what I wished to propose to him. I told him it was only an expedient, which would not remove the scandal, but lessen it and prevent an excess of indignation which he must otherwise expect. It was simply to go and pass at his country-house at Villers-Cotterets the five last days of Holy Week, and Easter Sunday and Monday; to take with him no ladies or *roués*, but half a dozen persons whom he liked, of good reputation, with whom to talk and amuse himself; to eat *maigre*, in which he could have just as good eating as in *gras;* not to talk loosely at table, or sit there too long; to go to service on Good Friday and to high-mass on Easter-Sunday; and that was all I asked of him. He took the advice in good part; in fact, it comforted him, for he did not know what I might propose; he thanked me for having thought of the expedient, and was really persuaded that the trip was wise and that he ought to make it. The misery was that the good he resolved upon was so seldom executed, because of the scoundrels with whom he surrounded himself. This was just what happened now. At the first word he uttered about it his mistresses and *roués* took alarm, and the worthy group so worked on his facile nature that the trip was abandoned. When I took leave of him to go to my own estate I conjured him to restrain himself on the four holy days, namely, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday; and above all things, not to commit the gratuitous sacrilege of taking the sacrament, which would injure him more with the world which he expected to conciliate than his abstention, because his life would soon and very publicly give the lie to it.

Thereupon I went off to La Ferté, hoping to have, at least, warded off the worst. I had the grief to learn that after passing the last days of Holy Week worse than equivocally, though with more concealment than usual, he had been to nearly all the functions of those days, and on Easter-Sunday had heard high mass at Sainte-Eustache, his parish church where with great pomp and ceremony he had taken the sacrament. Alas! it was the last communion of this unhappy prince; and it resulted, as regards the world, precisely as I had warned him. Let us leave so sad a matter and turn to those that were happening elsewhere.

Cabal which committed the regent to England.

We have seen the beginning of the Scotch project, the secret journey of the Pretender to embark in Bretagne and, his escape from the assassins of Stair. This project had been resolved upon with the late king and with the King of Spain, who agreed between them to pay the costs. The death of Louis XIV. was therefore, from this point of view, one of the greatest misfortunes of James III. The memory of the king was still too recent at the time of this secret journey for France to seem to have changed in sentiment. He was therefore allowed to go on, but without the intention of giving him any help, unless encouraged to do so by a sudden revolution in Great Britain. I, myself, was thoroughly Jacobite, and fully persuaded that the interest of France was to give England a long-protracted domestic occupation, which should put her out of condition to think of foreign affairs and of encroaching upon the commerce of Spain and our own. Nor had we a less interest in keeping out of relations with the King of England, who by his States and his interests in Germany was more German than English, and always in fear and in leading strings and, as much as he could be, in union with the emperor.

Thinking as I did about England, I could not like an alliance with his ambassador, which a triumvirate formed of Noailles, Canillac, and the Abbé Dubois, seeking to turn the regent toward King George, pressed upon the former by an arugment that was purely selfish, consequently detestable, namely: that King George was a usurper of the crown of Great Britain, and, if any misfortune happened to the young king, the Duc d'Orléans would be the usurper of the crown of France; consequently, the same interest was in both, and this was a reason to cultivate each other, and so guarantee their mutual crowns and avoid any step which should part them from this one grand object; whereby, they added, the French prince gained all that could insure his hopes, while the English king, being in possession, gained almost nothing. Moreover, they added, the latter had to do with a Pretender without friends or help, while the Duc d'Orléans, should the case occur, would have as competitor the powerful King of Spain, a country conjoined to the coasts of France by sea and land.

The Duc d'Orléans never desired the crown.

The Duc d'Orléans swallowed this poison, offered with great adroitness by persons on whose intelligence, capacity, and personal attachment he believed he ought to count, but who proved to him in the end that their intelligence was unsound, their capacity nought, their attachment worthless and solely concerned with themselves. The prince had too much penetration not to perceive the trap; but the wonder is the thing that seduced him, namely: the tortuous course of such policy, and not in the least the desire to reign. I fully expect that if these Memoirs ever see the light, this statement will create a laugh and discredit my other statements, and make me pass for a great fool, if I expect my readers to believe it; or for an imbecile if I believe it myself. Yet such is the simple truth; to which I sacrifice what may be thought of me. However incredible it may appear, it is true. I dare to advance the opinion that there are many such truths ignored in histories, which would amaze the world could they only be known, and which are unknown solely because so few histories are written at first hand.

I repeat it, and I owe it to the truth which reigns in these Memoirs, that never did the Duc d'Orléans desire the crown; he desired most sincerely the king's life; he did more, he desired that he should reign for himself, as we shall see in the sequel. Never of himself did he think of the king's life failing, nor of the things that might follow that misfortune, which he regarded most honestly as such, and as a misfortune for himself should it ever occur. The most that he did was to lend an ear to reflections about it which others presented; he was utterly incapable of thinking of it himself or of the measures to be taken should that contingency arrive. I do not say that if it arrived he would have abandoned the right given to him by the mutual renunciations and guaranteed by all Europe; but I do say that possession of the crown was to him the smallest consideration in that phase of the matter; and that honour, courage, and his own safety would have had by far the largest share. I say again: these are truths which my perfect knowledge, my conscience, and my honour oblige me to report.

I urge upon the regent a union with Spain.

The regent could not long hide from me the strong inclination he had taken towards England. I approved of it up to a certain point, to preserve the peace which the exhaustion of France and a long minority needed so sorely, and also to restrain the too dangerous leaning of King George to the emperor. But I could not approve of any dispositions going farther than that. I repeated to the regent what I had often said to him, and had also stated more than once before the Council of Regency, namely, that the essential interest of the State was in a solid and unalterable union with Spain. I also urged, when the regent and I were *tête-à-tête* (as we usually were), that after the attack upon him in Spain, and his reconciliation with the king, together with his personal position in relation to the renunciations, nothing could turn personally more to his good or more to his harm in France and throughout all Europe than to treat Spain in the manner I proposed or the reverse. I dwelt on the fact that to Rome (which in those days was still the centre of affairs) and to all the other Courts as well, the interests of the two branches of the house of Austria had never ceased to be equally strong, even to the domestic and internal affairs of the empire; that nothing could touch the one that the other did not incontinently intervene, as was shown in all the general and special treaties, so that the rest of Europe had long given up wishing to disunite them and only thought now of protection against them. I told him that this was the model we ought to follow if we wished to prosper both within and without the kingdom, and so raise ourselves to the point of becoming the dictators of Europe, as the house of Austria had so long been, — even after it had tacitly renounced universal sovereignty, to which it felt, at last, it could never attain.

I entreated the regent to remember that the true enemies of France were the house of Austria and the English; that the knowledge he had of history did not show him anything else than their hatred and jealousy of the sole crown that could arrest their ambition; that these passions had taken a fresh increase through the rivalry of Charles V. and François I., and from the vain efforts of Philippe II., in the days of the League; and since then, as regarded England, by the irreconcilable hatred of the late king for the Prince of Orange, the effects of which had been felt throughout all Europe, and by the protection given to James II. and his family, and the recognition of James III., in spite of the solemn engagements of the Peace of Ryswick, which King William, dying as he was, had made use of to unite all Europe against France, and to rouse the hatred of Englishmen into fury. I begged him to consider that although a cabal of women at the Court of Queen Anne had saved France from fatal disaster by separating England from her allies, he ought to see that the treaties of peace that followed were only the work of a Court cabal, which found them for its own interests, in spite of the nation and even against the majority of the Court.

The regent, who listened to me with great attention, had nothing to oppose to the force of these natural arguments. He agreed to the principles and the facts. He assured me that his intention was to ally himself as much as he could with Spain; but that this resolution ought not to be allowed to penetrate the mind of Spain, governed as it was by an ambitious queen and a very dangerous minister [Alberoni], who could turn the King of Spain to act as they pleased, and were very capable of abusing this knowledge.[1] Still less was it desirable to show this resolution to England and the other powers, as it would only produce a coolness towards us, redouble their jealousy and their efforts to divide us from Spain, and convince them that we were always considering them as enemies. He went on to say that such cautious management was all the more necessary because, as I knew very well, the great maxim of the Court of Vienna, especially since the Peace of Ryswick, was an indissoluble alliance with the maritime powers, like that already formed by King William between England and Holland, which commercial jealousy had never been able to shake, — an alliance which the emperor, being master of the empire, could force to take up arms without other cause than his will and personal interests.

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[1] Saint-Simon's record of the Regency is largely made up of the history and intrigues of the Court of Spain; it would be impossible to make a

I agreed with the regent as to the solid value of the precaution he proposed, provided it was only a precaution, and that he would agree to hold to the maxims I had just suggested. He assured me that that was his firm intention; and the conversation finished thus, — turning finally on the mystery and caution with which he ought to aid the Pretender, now landed in Scotland, concealing the help he gave him in thickest darkness, unless he met with some unhoped-for and rapid success. Nevertheless, the regent had not the strength to shake off that pernicious idea of two usurpers which had been inculcated in him, nor to resist the continual talk of those three men, who in concert with one another — sometimes together, sometimes separately — kept always at him and put constant obstacles in the way of everything that did not suit their views with regard to Stair and England. I often had bouts with the regent about it. If I had not known his feebleness, I might

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clear and comprehensible abridgment of them, and therefore that part of the Memoir is chiefly omitted. — Tr.

often have hoped to make him change his course; but I was only one against three, whose successive assiduity easily knocked over all that I said, demonstrated, and even convinced him of; so that the regent was invariably hooked in by them as he floated, against his inclination. He indemnified himself for this by jests and taunts upon them, to which Dubois was accustomed, and Noailles only shook his ears; but Canillac's pride was often wounded. The regent let him sulk, laughed, and presently coaxed him, so much had that man's pompous jargon accustomed the regent to consider him.

Rascality of Stair and Bentivoglio.

Stair and the Nuncio Bentivoglio were two rascals, who to advance their own fortunes held nothing sacred, and were now working for the overthrow of France; and if either of the two was more corrupt, blacker, and a greater scoundrel than the other, it was Bentivoglio. Both were public impostors taken almost in the act, and so well-known and dishonoured even in their own Courts that their recall could not have been refused if asked for vigorously. But the regent kept these firebrands near him under the name and character of Pope's nuncio and English ambassador, — the two greatest enemies that France and his person could have had. We shall see a few traits of that infamous nuncio, who was not ashamed to keep an opera girl, by whom he had two daughters, so publicly known as such that they went by the names of Unigenitus and Legend. If I were to swell these memoirs with the details of what passed concerning the bull during the regency and the nunciature of Bentivoglio it is not employing too strong a term to say — and say to its fullest extent — that the reader's hair would stand on end at the recital of the daily conduct of Bentivoglio. He was sustained by the former Bishop of Troyes, who had thought very differently in other days, though now his friends the Maréchal de Villeroy, the Rohans, and others of the cabal had turned him round, he supposing it made him more in the fashion on one side, and more important on the other.

The party of the Unigenitus make me an odious proposition.

This party, immediately after the death of the king, had endeavoured to win me over, or at any rate not to have me against them. They were not ignorant of my sentiments through Père Tellier, from whom I had never hidden them. Cardinal de Bissy, and, some time after, the Prince and the Cardinal de Rohan, both together, talked to me. I replied, civilly and modestly, that I was not a bishop, neither was I learned or a theologian; and on that line I beat a retreat. It did not satisfy them. The Duc de La Force, who was devoted to the Jesuits from the time of his conversion, was despatched to me to make a last effort. For myself, I should have raised no standard in this affair. I restrained myself within the bounds that were proper to a man who could speak and give his opinion in the Council of Regency, or in private to the regent; but they knew, from the days of the late king, what they could count on as to me, and they were alarmed by my intimacy with Cardinal de Noailles. La Force argued with me on the grounds of the matter. He knew, and expressed very well what he knew; but as policy was his religion, and in order to convince me he had to be convinced himself, it is no wonder that he did not succeed.

At an end, finally, of his reasons and reasonings, he began upon the regent's interest, present and future, implicating Rome, the Jesuits, and most of the bishops, and spread himself upon that. But as politics and self-interest can never take the place of religion and truth, his policy was as vain with me as his doctrine. Not knowing what to do further, he came at last to the argument *ad hominem,* from which, as I heard afterwards, he and those whom he served hoped much. He said he must own to me that he did not understand me, and that he could not reconcile my opinions with my conduct; that I was openly the enemy of the Duc de Noailles, never sparing him and never being moved by all he did to soften me; that I even piqued myself upon this; that I ran a tilt against him at every meeting of the Council of Regency and wherever else I met him; but that while I did not hide my desire to ruin him I neglected the sure and certain means I had in hand, and continued to be the friend and supporter of the Cardinal de Noailles. I asked La Force what was this sure and certain means that I had of destroying the Duc de Noailles, and assured him that he would do me the greatest pleasure if he would tell me. "Destroy his uncle," he replied. "You can do it by simply supporting the other side. The uncle lost, the nephew necessarily falls with him, and you are avenged." Horror made the blood rush into my face. "Monsieur," I said angrily, "is that how matters of religion are treated? Convince yourself once for all, and tell it flatly to your friends, that however certain I might be of causing the total and irrevocable fall of the Duc de Noailles by pulling a single hair from the head of his uncle, he would live in safety from me. No, monsieur," I added with indignation, "I admit that there is nothing honourable that I would not do to crush the Duc de Noailles, but he may live and reign two thousand years before I would kill him through the body of the cardinal." La Force seemed confounded, and after that answer he never tried to persuade me again. I never told this to the Cardinal de Noailles, or to any one who might repeat it to him.

The Duchesse de Berry, who lived in the manner I have already explained, chose apparently to spend the summer nights in the garden of the Luxembourg in perfect liberty. Accordingly she had all the gates walled up, and kept none open, except that of the iron railing at the foot of the staircase in the middle of the palace. This garden, public at all times, was the resort of the entire faubourg of Saint-Germain, which was thus deprived of it. M. le Duc immediately threw open the gardens of the hôtel de Condé and made them public, for a contrast. The uproar was great, and the remarks unreserved as to the reasons for this closure. The princess was also much annoyed at having to wear mourning. The merchants of stuffs seized the moment to induce her to ask the regent to shorten the regulated periods of mourning, which he did with his usual persuadability, so that now such garments are scarcely worn for the nearest relatives, and may be worn for those who are not relations at all, with the utmost indecency. But, as the bad always lasts longer than good, this shortening of mourning is the one sole regulation of the regency which exists in the present day.

The Duchesse de Berry walls up the garden of the Luxembourg.

III.

Parliament persisted in opposing two of the regent's edicts: namely, those of erecting the two offices of grand-master of posts and superintendent of buildings. They pretended that, these offices having been suppressed, and the suppression enregistered with a clause that they should not be re-established, they were forced to reject them. It was not that the matter was of interest to themselves or to the people, nor yet to the State; but this assembly wanted to figure, to make itself of importance, to be reckoned with; and it could only do this by fighting and by deliberate opposition, for which it lost no occasion. It had sounded the regent and then fathomed him; his weakness assured it of success. He was surrounded by enemies who kept him, in a way, in awe of them, and who, with far less mind and knowledge than himself, deceived and fooled him, they being allied with the parliament, which, in turn, had the bastards with it, and held the princes of the blood in check. These enemies were: the Maréchal de Villeroy, whose head had been turned by hearing conversations about the Memoirs of Cardinal de Retz and Joly, which were then extremely in vogue, and who wanted to be another Duc de Beaufort, leader of the Fronde, king of the *halles* and of Paris, the supporter of parliament; d'Effiat, friend of Villeroy and the Duc du Maine, who had long ago sold his master and found it profitable to negotiate between him and parliament; Besons, a dull fool, though marshal of France, who had put himself under d'Effiat's

Parliament opposes the edicts of the regent.

tutelage; Canillac; Noailles, of whom the regent was in mortal terror as to his management of the finances, and who was delighted to take part in the negotiations with parliament, and see troubles arise that would make him necessary; Huxelles, the intimate friend of the president, whose theme with the regent was the necessity of a good understanding with parliament in order to restrain it in all matters relating to the bull and Rome; and finally, Broglie, Nocé, and other little fellows, taught by the rest, or by their own intimates, to slip in their word *à propos.* Thus, first on one matter, then on another, the struggle increased, strengthened itself, grew heated, and finally brought things, as we shall see, to the edge of the precipice.

I had talked against all this with an infinite number of arguments; the weakness and fears of the regent set themselves up against all that I could say to him. In the end, I declared to him that I washed my hands of what would happen to him through the misery of his conduct with parliament, the audacity of the performances of that body, the rascality of the men who surrounded him, who had flung their grapnel on him, and whom he was loading with kindness, confidence, and favours, while they were selling him to their own interests and views, and to the parliament. I added that I would never again, in all my life, speak to him of anything relating to the parliament; but I predicted, and begged him to remember it, that he would not go far before matters reached a point between him and that body at which he would find himself forced either to yield all authority to it, and all exercise of the regency, or have recourse to violent measures that were dangerous. I kept my word; and we shall see by and by what happened.

He had at that time a matter to bring forward which all these men were using to make him docile towards parliament.

Law, called Lass; his bank.

A Scotchman, of I know not what station, a great gamester and a great combiner, who had won immensely in all the countries he had visited, came to France in the last months of the late king's reign. His name was Law; but after he became well known people were so accustomed to call him Lass that his real name of Law disappeared. Some one spoke of him to the Duc d'Orléans as a man profoundly versed in matters of banking, commerce, the movement of money, currency, and finances. This gave the prince a desire to see him. He received him several times, and was so pleased that he spoke of him to Desmarets (then minister of finance) as a man from whom he could get ideas; and I remember that he often talked of him to me at that time. Desmarets sent for Law, who was with him a long while on various occasions; but I never knew what passed between them or what resulted from these interviews, except that Desmarets was pleased and felt some esteem for him.

At that time the Duc d'Orléans only saw him now and then; but after the first opening of affairs on the death of the king was over, Law, who had made acquaintance with the subordinates of the Palais-Royal and some alliance with the Abbé Dubois, presented himself again before the Duc d'Orléans, and soon after saw him in private and proposed to him his financial scheme. The regent made him work with the Duc de Noailles, Rouillé, and Amelot, the latter on the question of commerce. The first two were afraid of an intruder put by the hand of the regent into their administration, so that he was long bandied from pillar to post, though always supported by the regent. In the end, the idea of the bank project became so pleasing to the prince that he resolved to carry it out. He spoke privately to all the leading men of finance, in whom he found great opposition. He had often talked to me about it, and I had contented myself with simply listening to a matter that I have never liked and consequently never understood; the accomplishment of which, moreover, seemed to me very far off. When the regent had fully made up his mind, he called an assembly of financial and commercial leaders, at which Law explained the whole plan of the bank which he proposed to establish. He was listened to as much as he wished. Some, who saw that the regent had almost determined on the scheme acquiesced; but the greater number opposed it.[1]

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[1] Extract from the minutes of this meeting, held Oct. 24, 1715, for the institution of the Bank of Law: "The idea of this bank is to transfer all the revenues of the king to the bank; to give the receivers and farmers-general notes of ten crowns, a hundred crowns, a thousand crowns of the weight and standard coin of the present day; which shall be called *bank-bills;* the said bills shall be conveyed by the said receivers and farmers-general to the royal treasury, which shall return to them negotiable receipts [*quittances comptables*]. All those to whom payments are due by the king will receive at the royal treasury only bank bills, the value of which they can immediately go to the bank and receive, no one being forced to keep them or to receive them in commerce; but the Sieur Lass asserts that the convenience will be such that every one will be charmed to have these bank bills rather than money, because of the facility of making payments in paper, and the certainty of receiving the value whenever they wish. He adds that it will be impossible ever to have more bills than money, because the bills will only be made pro rata to coin; and by this means all costs of remittance, the danger of conveyances, the multiplicity of clerks, etc., will be avoided."

After opinions had been given by all present the regent said that "he had come there persuaded that the bank ought to be established; but, after the opinions he had just heard, he agreed wholly with that of M. le Duc de Noailles; and it would be announced to every one that same day that the bank would not be carried out."

John Law was born in Edinburgh in April, 1671. Through his mother, Jane Campbell, he belonged to the family of the Dukes of Argyll. His father was a rich banker in Edinburgh and possessed the manorial estates of Lauriston and Randlestone. The above statement of the banking system does not fully set forth John Law's theory, which was "to base paper money on some other article of value than specie, and not redeemable in specie, but which shall maintain an equality in value with specie;" and also "that a commodity may be purchased and its price be retained."

Law was not disheartened. People talked a little French under their breaths; the same assembly was called again, and, in presence of the regent, Law again explained his project. This time there were few to oppose him, and those few feebly. The Duc de Noailles dared not hold to his opinion, as he was urged to do by the Maréchal de Villeroy, who always wanted to thwart the regent and had no other reason, for he knew nothing about finances or anything else; in consequence of which he usually gave his vote in council in two words, or if, very rarely, he had to say more he brought his opinion on a little sheet of paper, and when it was his turn to speak he would put on his spectacles and read off hastily the five or six lines he had written. I never saw him explain his opinion in any other way; and in this way not more than four or five times at most. The bank was thus approved, and it now became necessary to propose it to the Council of Regency.

The regent took the trouble to explain the matter in private to every member of the Council and to let him gently understand that he wished the bank to pass without opposition. He talked it out with me fully; and I was forced to reply. I told him that I did not conceal my ignorance or my distaste for financial matters; yet all that he had now explained seemed to me good in itself, in so far that without levy, without costs, and without causing harm or embarrassment to any one, money could suddenly be doubled by the bills of this bank, and become portable with great ease; but that I saw two drawbacks to that advantage: first, to govern

This theory had already been rejected by the Scotch parliament. The speculation of the Mississippi, by which he ruined himself and France was only an incidental circumstance in his career, at the close of it. See "Recherches Historiques sur le Système de Law," par M. Levasseur; and "Histoire du système de finances pendant les années 1719 et 1720," par Duhautchamp. — Tr.

the bank with enough foresight and wisdom not to make more bills than they ought, in order to be always above their resources and so be able to boldly face all contingencies and pay coin to every one who might ask it for the bills they brought; second, that what was excellent in a republic, or in a monarchy where finance is wholly popular as it is in England, became dangerous in an absolute monarchy like that of France, where the necessities of war ill-undertaken and ill-sustained, the rapacity of ministers, favourites, mistresses, the luxury, extravagant expenditure, and prodigality of a king might soon exhaust a bank, ruin the holders of bills, and overthrow the kingdom. The Duc d'Orléans agreed to all this but insisted that a king would have so great and essential an interest in never injuring, or letting minister, favourite, or mistress injure the bank that this great danger need never be feared. On that point we disputed long without in the least convincing each other, so that when, a few days later, he proposed the bank to the Council of Regency, I gave my opinion as I have now explained it, but with more force and at greater length; and I concluded by voting to reject the bank as a fatal temptation in an absolute monarchy, although in a free country it might be a very good and wise establishment.

Few present dared to be of that opinion; the bank was adopted. The Duc d'Orléans made me some few reproaches, but gently, for having said so much. I excused myself on the duty that I owed to my honour and conscience to give my opinion according to my conviction, after having thought it over thoroughly; and also to explain myself sufficiently to make my opinion clear, as well as my reasons for holding it. Immediately after, the edict was enregistered by parliament without difficulty [May 2, 1716]; that assembly being willing occasionally to oblige the regent with a good grace, in order to stiffen itself against him later more effectually.

The regent puts me in communication with Law, against my will.

Some time later (to relate the matter consecutively), the Duc d'Orléans wished me to see Law and let him explain to me his plans; he asked it as a kindness. I excused myself as best I could; but several times the regent returned to the charge, and finally exacted it. Accordingly, Law came to see me. With much that was foreign in his behaviour, his expressions and his accent, he explained himself in very good terms, with great clearness and precision. He talked to me long about his bank, which was really an excellent thing in itself, but for another country than France, and with a prince less facile than the regent. Law had no other solution to give me of my two objections than those the regent had already given, which did not satisfy me. But as the thing was done, and the question now was how to govern it, it was principally on that point that our conversation turned. I made him feel, as much as I could, the importance of not showing too much accommodation, lest it be taken advantage of with a regent so kind, facile, open to influence, and so environed. I masked as best I could what I wanted him to understand as to that, and I dwelt on the necessity of his holding himself ever ready to face, instantly, every holder of bank-bills who might ask for payment; on which readiness depended the credit or the overthrow of the bank. On taking leave Law begged me to be willing to receive him occasionally, and we parted well satisfied with each other, at which the regent was more satisfied still.

Law came several times to see me, and showed a strong desire to ally himself with me. I kept to mere civilities; because finance cannot enter my head, and I regarded our conversations as so much lost time. Some time later, the regent, who often spoke to me of Law with very great liking, said that he had a kindness to ask, and even to exact of me; it was that I would receive a visit from Law regularly once a week. I represented to him the perfect uselessness of such interviews, in which I was incapable of learning anything, and still more of enlightening Law about matters of which he knew all and I knew nothing. I excused myself in vain; the regent was determined, and I had to obey. Law, informed by him, came to me, and owned with good grace that he had asked this favour of the regent, not venturing to ask it of me. This visit was preliminary. The following Tuesday he came, and continued to do so punctually on that day until his insolvency. One hour and a half, often two hours was the usual length of our conversations. He always took care to inform me of the favour his bank received in France, and in foreign countries, of his proceeds, his prospects and his conduct, of the counteraction he met with from leaders in finance and in the magistracy, of his motives, and, above all, of his balance-sheet, in order to convince me that he was more than in a condition to meet all holders of bills, no matter what sums they might demand.

I soon knew that if Law desired these regular interviews it was not that he expected to make me an able financier; but as a man of intelligence, and he had plenty of it, he wanted access to a servitor of the regent who was more than all others truly in his confidence, and one who had long been accustomed to speak to him of everything with the utmost frankness and the most entire liberty; he was seeking by this frequent intercourse to win my friendship, and learn from me the intrinsic quality of those surrounding the regent, whom he could only judge by the outside; and little by little get counsel from me on the obstacles he met with and the persons with whom he had to do. The bank being under way and flourishing, I thought it necessary to sustain it. I therefore lent myself to giving the information that Law desired, and we soon began to talk with a confidence which I never had reason to regret. I shall not enter into the details of this bank, or of the other schemes that followed it, and the operations that were done in consequence. It is a matter of finance which might well fill volumes. I shall only speak of it as it relates to the history of the time, or to something that concerns me personally. I might add here who and what was Law; but I postpone that to a time when the satisfaction of such curiosity will come better in place.

Arouet, poet under the name of Voltaire, exiled.

Arouet, son of a man who was my father's notary and mine until his death, was exiled and sent to Tulle for very satirical and very impudent verses. I should not amuse myself by noting such a trifle if this same Arouet, becoming a great poet and academician under the name of Voltaire, had not also become, through many tragical adventures, a sort of personage in the republic of letters, and even an important one among certain persons. His father never knew what to do with this unbelieving son, whose irreligion afterwards made his fortune as Voltaire, a name he took to disguise his own.

Death of Mme. Guyon.

Another person illustrious for the effects she had produced, but of very different stuff, died at this time, and her death did not make the noise it would have made earlier. This was the famous Mme. Guyon. She had been exiled to Anjou about the time of the disturbance and end of the affair of Quietism. There she had lived virtuously and obscurely, without making herself talked of. About eight or ten years previous to her death she obtained permission to live at Blois, where she conducted herself in the same manner, and where she died without any singularity, having shown none since her last exile, — always very devout and very retiring, approaching the sacraments frequently. She had survived her most illustrious protectors and her nearest friends.

The king taken to visit the Chancellor Pontchartrain.

The Maréchal de Villeroy took the king to see the Observatoire. He was at all times a friend of the Chancellor Pontchartrain, now living in retirement at the Institution [house of the Oratorians] or rather in the adjoining building, to which he had an entrance of his own, though he never used it. On the way from the Tuileries to the Observatoire it was necessary to pass his door. The Maréchal remembered that when the late king's grandsons went to Paris, the king ordered the Duc de Beauvilliers to take them to see old Beringhen, in order to show them a man he loved, who had had a fine career, and then had done justice to his years by never leaving his home in Paris among his friends and family. Villeroy, for once, thought very rightly that it was good to let the king see a man still sound and vigorous and in a state of body and mind to figure long in the ministry and as chancellor and Keeper of the Seals, who, without disappointment and without fear, had left all to put a calm and saintly interval between life and death, in a perfect retreat where he saw no one, and was wholly occupied by his religious duties, yet without abasement. This, the Maréchal thought, would accustom the king to honour virtue. He therefore sent word from the Observatoire to the late chancellor that on his way back the king would enter his house and pay him a visit. Nothing could be more simple than to receive this unusual honour, of which he little dreamed; but Pontchartrain, consistently modest and detached from the world, gave orders to be warned in time, and was at his street door when the king arrived. He did vainly what he could to prevent the king from getting out of his carriage, but he succeeded, by force of mind, obstinacy, and respect, in having the visit paid in the street; it lasted a quarter of an hour, after which the king re-entered his carriage. Pontchartrain watched him depart, and then returned to his dear modesty, where his perfect renunciation made him at once forget the honour of the visit and the pious adroitness with which he had avoided as much as he could of it. All those who knew him admired this, and praised Maréchal de Villeroy for a thought so honourable and so becomingly executed.

Assembles of Huguenots. The regent inclined to recall them.

The Huguenots, of whom many had remained in France, or had returned here, most of them under feigned abjurations, profited by a period which might pass for one of liberty in comparison to that of the late king. They assembled, clandestinely at first and in small numbers; then they took courage from the scant notice taken of them, and soon they had large assemblies in Poitou, Saintonge, Guyenne, and Languedoc. They even marched about Guyenne, where one of their preachers made vehement exhortations in the open country. These men were not armed, and soon dispersed; but close to the place where they had assembled two carts laden with guns, bayonets, and pistols were found. There were also little nocturnal assemblages in Paris toward the end of the faubourg Saint-Antoine.

I persuade him not to do so.

The regent spoke to me of this, and in connection with it about the contradictions and difficulties with which the edicts and declarations of the late king concerning the Huguenots were full, so that they could neither be enacted because of the impossibility of reconciling them with one another, nor executed in the matter of marriages and wills, etc. I was often the witness of this truth at the Council of Regency, partly in suits there referred because there was no one but the late king who could interpret his own meaning in these diverse contradictions; partly in reports of consultations between the various tribunals and the chancellor which he brought to the Council. From complaining of these embarrassments, the regent came to that of the cruelty with which the late king had treated the Huguenots; the harm done by the revocation of the edict of Nantes; the immense injury the State had suffered and would suffer still in its depopulation, in its commerce, in the hatred this treatment had awakened in all the Protestants of Europe. I abridge a long conversation in which, up to this point, I found nothing to gainsay. After much solid argument that was perfectly true, the regent began to make reflections about the ruined state in which the king had left France; and then about the gain of the people, the arts, finances, and commerce that might be made in a moment by the recall of the Huguenots to the country; and finally he proposed to me that measure. I do not wish to accuse any one of having suggested this thought to the regent, because I never knew from him the quarter whence it came; but in the extreme desire he had never ceased to indulge to ally himself closely with Holland, and above all with England, ever since he had been possessed by Noailles, Canillac, and the Abbé Dubois, suspicion is not very difficult. He hoped by this recall to flatter the maritime powers, give them the greatest possible mark of esteem, friendship, and condescension, and all this masked by the apparent hope of reviving, enriching, and restoring the kingdom in a moment.

I was glad for the Huguenots. But I felt by the preface he employed, as here stated, that although his desire might be great, he saw and comprehended the full weight and results of such a resolution, for which he was seeking approval, I dare not say support. I profited instantly by this fortunate and wise timidity, and I told him that, abstracting from the matter all that religion dictated upon it, I should content myself by speaking a language which was certainly more becoming in me. I represented to him the disorders and civil wars which the Huguenots had caused in France from the reign of Henri II. to that of Louis XIII., what ruin and bloodshed; I reminded him that under their shadow the League had been formed which had so nearly torn the crown from the head of Henri IV.; and all that this had cost our kings and the State against both Huguenots and leaguers; each of them supported, as they were, by foreign powers, from whom we had to bear everything, while they despised us, and profited by our internal troubles; so that actually Henri IV. owed his crown to the number who endeavoured to carry it off, each for himself. I begged the regent to reflect that he was now enjoying the benefit of a great domestic repose, which he ought to compare with what I had now represented; that it was from this quiet and peaceful position that he ought to reason in the matter, or rather be convinced that it needed no reasoning, at a time when no power demanded such a step; which the late king had had the courage and strength to reject when, exhausted in supplies, money, resources, and almost in troops, his frontiers captured and open and on the eve of calamitous disasters, his enemies demanded of him the return of the Huguenots as one of the conditions without which they would put no limits to their conquests or end a war the king had no longer the means to sustain.

I likewise made the regent feel another danger from this recall. It was that, after the sad and cruel experience the Huguenots had had of the prostration of their power under Louis XIII., of the revocation of the edict of Nantes by the late king, and the rigorous treatment that followed it and still continued, it was not to be expected that they would return to France without the strongest and most assured safeguards, which could only be the same as those under which they had already made five kings groan. I ended by entreating the regent to weigh the advantages he expected to gain by this return with the disadvantages and manifold dangers which would inevitably accompany it; I assured him that these men, this commerce, this wealth, which he believed would accrue to the kingdom, were men, wealth, and commerce inimical to the kingdom; and that the pleasure and satisfaction the maritime and other Protestant powers would show in the event would be solely at the incomparable and irreparable blunder which would make them arbiters and masters of the fate and conduct of France both within and without our borders. To these and many other strong reasons the regent had nothing to oppose that could balance them in any way. The conversation lasted a long time; but after that day there was no further question of recalling the Huguenots, or of departing from the system established by the late king, except where the contradictions and effective impossibilities in the letter of these divers ordinances made their execution impossible.

Louville sent on a confidential mission to the King of Spain.

The negotiations between France and England occasionally took a smiling turn. Both were anxious, from different points of view, to draw Spain into their conferences. The regent profited by this to endeavour to obtain for Spain the restitution of Gibraltar, which was the one thing in the world which interested her most. Gibraltar was really a burden on the King of England, standing well as he did with the Barbary States and much superior in his navy to Spain. Possessing Port-Mahon, Gibraltar was very inferior in usefulness and in importance to the outlay and consumption that it cost him.

He consented, therefore, to return it to Spain, for a few trifles that are not worth remembering; but as he did not wish to expose himself to the outcries of the political party against him, he exacted the strictest secrecy and a formal agreement. He requested that nothing should go through Alberoni, nor through any minister, Spanish or English, but directly from the regent to the King of Spain through some confidential agent chosen by the regent, and on condition that this agent should be admitted to speak to the King of Spain *tête-à-tête*. This confidential envoy was to carry credentials from the regent; namely, a letter relating to the terms of the treaty, that is to say, a document specifying the trifles demanded by the King of England, ready for signature, and a positive order from the King of England, written and signed by his own hand, to the Governor of Gibraltar, to turn over that place to the King of Spain the moment that order was handed to him, and to retire with the garrison, etc., to Tangier. At the time of execution a Spanish general was to march quickly to Gibraltar, on pretence of exercising his men; he was then to present the order of the King of England, be received in consequence, and put at once into possession of the place. The pretence was weak, but that was the affair of the King of England.

The Duc de Noailles was then in great favour and wanted to be the sole doer of all this. It is best not to be vainglorious. I knew nothing of it until its second stage, and then through Louville before the regent spoke to me, as he did soon after. Without being shrewd, I should have distrusted the King of England in such a manœuvre. He was certainly not ignorant with what care and jealousy the queen and Alberoni kept the King of Spain apart and inaccessible to every one; he must have known that the surest way to fail was to attempt to hold intercourse with the king without their knowledge, or in spite of them and without their co-operation. As for the choice of agent, of all the men in France, Louville was, in my opinion, the very last on whom it should have fallen. The better he had formerly stood with the King of Spain, and the closer he had been in his confidence, the more his arrival would alarm the queen and Alberoni, and the more they would use all means not to let a man so dangerous to their influence and authority approach the king. I said so to Louville, who did not disagree with me and only replied that in his surprise at the mission he had not dared to refuse it; and moreover, if he succeeded in reaching the king, the rendition of Gibraltar was so important a matter that he should be unlucky indeed if it did not secure to him the payment of what was due on his Spanish pensions, a very serious object to him. To be chosen and to depart was one and the same thing. He had time, however, to come and talk the matter over with me; and the night before he left he again came to me, and told me with what kindness and confidence the Duc d'Orléans had spoken to him of himself and the mission on which he sent him. The plan was that Louville, taking a circuitous route by way of Foix and Arragon, should arrive in Madrid before any one got wind of his journey. But in spite of all his precautions the secret was not well kept.

The suspicions of the King of Spain against Alberoni were strengthening daily. The queen exhorted the latter to suffer in patience; while the minister blamed her for her supineness, her compliance to the king when she ought to control the perpetual distrust of his feeble and irresolute mind, which was capable of yielding to any one who chose to lay hold of it for evil purposes. He found the queen indolent, hating trouble and business, and seeking only her own repose. He urged her not to allow either of them to be excluded from the government of affairs, and to be on her guard, amid the confusion of nations and languages which flooded the Court of Spain, against the secret and determined cabal of certain Spaniards who were seeking to recall their former government. Alberoni warned her that if she ceased to uphold her authority in public affairs she need not count on any influence or consideration in the world, nor on the respect of her subjects. Troubles were at their very worst in Spain; the peoples overwhelmed with taxation; the seigneurs in fear and degradation; the nobles reduced to mendicity; neither troops, nor finances, nor navy, nor commerce, and no one capable of remedying such evils, while the house of Austria was always on watch with her partisans. Alberoni vaunted his own projects and assured the queen he could still mend all, provided he were sustained in them.

Gibraltar lost to Spain.

Things were at this point when Louville arrived at Madrid, and went to lodge with the Duc de Saint-Aignan [ambassador to Spain], who was greatly surprised, having received no warning. But a chance courier, who had met Louville at some distance from Madrid, brought word to Alberoni. We can imagine the jealous suspicions that tormented him, and his prompt alarm. He well knew the influence Louville had formerly had on the King of Spain; and the violent manner in which the Princesse des Ursins and the late queen had torn the king away from him. His alarm at this wholly unexpected arrival was so great that he used no decency in getting rid of him. He despatched an order by a courier instantly, forbidding Louville to come nearer to Madrid. The courier missed the envoy, but fifteen minutes after his arrival at Saint-Aignan's the latter received a note from Grimaldo [Alberoni's secretary], bearing an order from the King of Spain for his immediate departure. Louville replied that he was the bearer of credentials to the king, also of a letter from the regent to the king, and a commission to his Catholic Majesty which did not permit him to depart until it was executed. On receiving this answer, a courier was instantly despatched to Prince Cellamare [Spanish ambassador to France], with orders to ask for Louville's recall, and declaring that he was personally so disagreeable to the King of Spain that he would not see him, nor allow him to treat with any of his ministers. The fatigue of the journey followed by such a reception gave Louville a nephritic attack, to which he was subject, so that he ordered a bath to be prepared, into which he put himself in the course of the morning. Alberoni went in person to see him and induce him to leave at once. The state in which they told him Louville was did not stop him; he insisted on seeing him, against his will, in his bath. Nothing could be more civil than his words, nor more curt, negative, and determined than their meaning. Louville insisted that his credentials gave him a public character, namely: to execute an important commission from the King of France, nephew to the King of Spain; so that his Catholic Majesty could not refuse to hear it from his lips, and if he did not do so he would have reason to regret it. The dispute was sharp and long, in spite of Louville's condition, but he gained nothing.

Louville dared not go to see any one for fear of committing himself, and no one dared to go and see him. He made one attempt to see the King of Spain in the street, to try whether, if the latter saw him, he might not be induced to speak to him, in case, as was very probable, he had not been told of his arrival. But Alberoni had foreseen everything. Louville did really see the king pass, but it was impossible to make the king see him. Grimaldo came immediately after with a positive order for him to depart, and a warning to the Duc de Saint-Aignan that the King of Spain was very angry at this obstinate delay, and that he would not answer for what might happen if Louville's stay was prolonged. They both saw that it was useless to hope for an audience, and, consequently, that a longer stay could do no good, and might lead to violence, which, by its scandal, would embroil France; so Louville departed at the end of a week and returned as he came. Alberoni breathed again after his fright, and consoled himself by having shown his power in a way that would save him in future from the approach of any person to the King of Spain without his sanction. But he cost Spain Gibraltar, which she has not since then recovered. Such is the usefulness of prime ministers.

Louville having returned, it became necessary to send back to the King of England the documents, etc., that he had taken with him to Spain; and thus the affair of Gibraltar came to naught, except that it irritated Alberoni against the regent for having sent a secret commission to the King of Spain without his knowledge, and the regent against Alberoni for having made the project miscarry with such notoriety.

Death of Montrevel from fear of spilt salt.

The Maréchal de Montrevel, whose name will not be found in history, the pet of silly women, of fashion and the gay world, of the Maréchal de Villeroy, and almost of the late king, from whom he had drawn more than a hundred thousand francs a year in benefits which he still received, a man noted for nothing but that in which he had the smallest part, namely, a face which made him all his life the idol of women, a great birth, and brilliant valour, died about this time, cheating his creditors by leaving nothing but three thousand louis, and much plate and porcelain, and fearing nothing so much as an overturned salt-cellar. He was just preparing to go to Alsace. Dining with Biron (afterwards duke, peer, and marshal of France), a salt-cellar was overturned and the salt scattered over him. He turned pale, felt ill, and said he was a dead man; they were obliged to leave the table and take him home. There was no restoring the small amount of brains he had. Fever seized him that night and he died four days later, leaving no regrets but those of his creditors.

Marriage of the Duchesse d'Alba.

The Duchesse d'Alba married about this time the Abbé de Castiglione, whom she had brought with her to Paris on returning from Madrid. I have already spoken of them and shall only say here that the pope allowed him to keep the quite considerable revenues he received from his benefices, and that, in favour of this marriage, the King of Spain made him a grandee of the first class and gave him a place as gentleman of his bedchamber, an office which had long had no functions. He took the name of Duc de Solferino.

Bitterness between the princes of the blood and the bastards.

The year ended with great bitterness openly shown between the princes of the blood and the legitimatized princes. This struggle of the bastard against the legitimate son, this equality of condition in the issue from a double and public adultery and from a royal wife, this identity, so complete, between children born of the sacrament and of crime, revolted nature and affected the son and the posterity of the Duc d'Orléans no less than they did the Bourbon branch. Therefore justice, truth, reason, religion, nature, claims of birth, claims of power, claims of honour, interests of safety (shall I dishonour so many sacred reasons by adding a motive far less pure, but dear and keen in all men?), the powerful interests of vengeance, all concurred in the Duc d'Orléans to make him rejoice to find himself at last in a position to strike down the colossus beneath which he had so nearly been crushed, and to shiver it easily but surely into fragments, with the blessing of God and the acclamation of all orders of the kingdom and everybody else except a mere handful of henchmen and valets. Who, in his place, would not have dearly bought the happiness of such a position? It did not cause the very slightest sensation to the Duc d'Orléans! And yet this incredible indifference, this amazing detachment from himself under an opportunity which might have made the greatest saints on earth tremble for their own conduct, was no merit in him, either as regards this world about which he blinded himself so foolishly, or as regards the other on which he never made the slightest reflection. Alas! the hand of God was upon him and upon the kingdom. In this affair he was simply the prey and the plaything of d'Effiat and other men of that stamp whom the Duc du Maine kept near him, and whom the regent never distrusted, all the while keeping on his guard against his well-tried servitors. I had made it a rule, as I did about the parliament, never to open my lips to him about the bastards. After all that we had said to each other in former days about them he was ashamed and embarrassed before me, and I had nothing further to add.

1717.
Paris the sink of all Europe.

The inclinations, example, and favour of the late king had made Paris the sink of the licentiousness of all Europe; and it continued to be so long after him. Besides the mistresses of the late king, his bastards, those of Charles IX. (for I have seen one of them, a widow, and her daughter-in-law), those of Henri IV., those of M. le Duc d'Orléans, to whom his regency brought immense fortunes, those of the two branches of the two Bourbon brothers, Malause and Busset, the Vertus bastards of the last Duc de Bretagne, the bastard daughters of the last three Condés down to the Rothelins, bastards of bastards, — besides this population of French bastards, Paris has, I say, gathered in the mistresses of the kings of England and Sardinia, two of the Elector of Bavaria, and the numerous bastards of England, Bavaria, Savoie, Denmark, Saxony, and even those of Lorraine, who have all made, in Paris, great and rapid fortunes, piling one upon another wealth, orders, promotions that were more than premature, an infinite number of favours and distinctions of all kinds, with rank and the most distinguished honours; all being persons who would not even have been looked at in any other country of Europe; down to the infamous fruits of public incests, such as the little Duc de Montbéliard, declared solemnly to be such by the Aulic council of Vienna, and rejected as such by the empire and the whole house of Würtemberg. Such scum it was that France alone was capable of receiving and, sole among the nations of Europe, of honouring above her own highest nobility, who had the folly to concur and be the first to approve. It must, however, be admitted that a bastard of England and another of Saxony have rendered grand services to their States by gloriously commanding their armies.

D'Aguesseau, procureur-général, made chancellor.

On the eve of the Epiphany several of us were supping at our ease with Louville. A moment after the fruit was served some one entered and whispered in the ear of Saint-Contest, counsellor of State, who left the table immediately. His absence was short; but he returned so preoccupied, and promising to tell us why, that we thought only of leaving the table. As soon as we were alone and had gathered round the fire, he told us the news, which was that Chancellor Voysin, supping at home with his family and apparently well, had been suddenly stricken with apoplexy and had fallen over, as if dead, on Mme. de Lamoignon, and would not live, it was thought, two hours. In fact, he did not live so long, and never regained consciousness. The Duc de Noailles, notified of this event that evening, or during the night, went early to the regent, as he left his bed with his stomach undigested and his head very heavy with sleep and the supper of the night before, as he was every morning on rising and for some time after. Noailles sent away the few valets who were present, told the Duc d'Orléans of the chancellor's death, and immediately bombarded him for d'Aguesseau. The latter was summoned to the Palais-Royal at once, where Noailles waited for him as a matter of precaution. D'Aguesseau found him with the Duc d'Orléans in the cabinet of the latter, who, with the flattering compliments that always accompany the bestowal of favours, told him his intentions. Soon after, the regent left the cabinet and, taking d'Aguesseau by the arm, said to the assembled company that they saw before them a new and very worthy chancellor. Then, getting into his carriage, with the casket containing the Seals before him and accompanied by d'Aguesseau, he went to the Tuileries, spoke in praise of the latter to the king, and presented to him the casket of the Seals, on which the king laid his hand to signify that he gave it to d'Aguesseau, the regent still holding it.

D'Aguesseau, having received the Seals in this way, was modest under a flux of compliments; and, escaping as soon as he could, went home with the precious casket. The house was full of relatives and friends, all in a flutter about the summons from the regent. D'Aguesseau, his mind floundering in surprise, went up to see his brother, a sort of voluptuous philosopher, with much mind and much learning, but most of it very singular. He found him smoking before the fire in his dressing-gown. "Brother," he said, on entering, "I have come to tell you that I am chancellor." The brother turned round. "Chancellor!" said he, "what have you done with the other one?" "He died suddenly last night." "Oh! well, brother, I am very glad; I would rather it were you than I;" and that was all the congratulation he got from him.

A chancellor ought to be a personage, and in a regency he cannot help being one. This one has been a personage so long, for he still lives, and has been so battered by fortune in that great office, which seems as if it ought to be a haven of rest, that many reasons combine to make me break the rule I made never to speak at length about those who are still in the world at the time I write.

Career and character of Chancellor d'Aguesseau.

He was born November 26, 1668; made *avocat-général* January 12, 1691, at twenty-two and a half years old; *procureur-général* November 19, 1700, at thirty-two; chancellor and Keeper of the Seals of France February 2, 1717, when forty-six years of age. He was under middle height and stout, with an agreeable and very full face until his last trials, and always a countenance that was virtuous and intellectual; one eye, however, very much smaller than the other. It is remarkable that he never had a deliberating influence until he was chancellor; in parliament they made it a point not to follow his conclusions, out of jealousy at the reputation he had acquired, which prevailed over friendship and esteem. Much intelligence, industry, penetration, knowledge of all kinds, magisterial gravity, equity, piety, and innocence of life, formed the basis of his character. It may be said that here was a noble spirit and an incorruptible man (if we except the one affair of the Bouillons), and with it all, gentle, kind, humane, easy of access, and agreeable; with gayety and spicy pleasantry in private, though never wounding any one; extremely sober, polite without assumption, noble, without the least avariciousness; naturally lazy, which at last made him slow. Who would not suppose that a magistrate adorned with such virtues and talents, with memory, vast reading, eloquence in speaking and in writing, correctness even to the slightest expressions in ordinary conversation, and all the graces of fluency, would have made the greatest chancellor seen for centuries? It is true that he would have made a splendid president of the parliament; it is none the less true that, as chancellor, he made such men as Aligre and even Boucherat regretted. This paradox seems hard to understand; it is plain to the naked eye, however, during the thirty years that he has been chancellor, and on such evidence that I might well rest on that; but so strange a fact deserves to be investigated.

This fortunate assemblage of qualities was spoiled in various ways that were hidden in his first life, but revealed at once as soon as he entered the second. The long and sole nourishment that he had taken from the breast of parliament had so moulded into him its maxims and its pretensions that he regarded it with more love, respect, and veneration than the English feel for their parliaments, which have nothing but the name in common with ours. I shall not say too much if I assert that he looked upon all that emanated from that assembly as a believer well trained in his religion regards the decisions on faith of the œcumenical councils. From this species of worship came three defects, which appeared very frequently throughout his career.

First, he was always for the parliament, whatever it might undertake against the royal authority; whereas his office, which made him the superior and the moderator of the parliaments and of the words of the king to them, obliged him to restrain them when they passed their proper limits, and above all to repress them firmly when they attacked the king's authority. His equity and his intelligence showed him plainly enough the aberrations of parliament in this respect; but to repress them was more than he could do. His softness, seconded by the sort of worship with which he honoured the parliament, was pained and grieved to see it in error; but to let it be known that it *was* in error was a crime in his eyes which he groaned to see committed by others, and which he could not commit himself. He therefore put all his talents to palliating, excusing, covering-up, and making specious interpretations of its faults, negotiating with it on one side, and with the regent on the other; profiting by the latter's timidity, supineness, and levity to blunt and enervate all resistance on his part; so that instead of having in this highest magistrate a firm supporter of the royal authority, and a true judge of justice, all that could be got from him was a few stammering words which enfeebled the little that he really meant to say, and gave courage, strength, and haughtiness to the parliament.

A second defect was the extension of this worship of parliament to every man who wore the legal robe, down, I may say, to the officers of royal bailiwicks. Every man who wore the robe ought, according to him, to be regarded with awe, whatever he did; and must not be complained of, unless with the greatest circumspection. Complaints were not listened to if they were not supported by the plainest legal proof; and even then they seemed to him deplorable. He would turn himself every way to save the honour of the robe, — as if the robe in general were dishonoured because one rascal had clothed himself in it for money. He proposed compromises; and, if the complainants were of a certain sort, discontinuance for the purpose of reporting to him; and then he had recourse to those ruinous delays which are equivalent to the denial of justice, and from which the man in the robe came out cheaply, always as white as he could be made, and as lightly reprimanded. In this spirit he could not understand how any one should bring himself to attack a decree of parliament. He employed the same manœuvres to avoid it, and it was only after a long defence that he would let the matter be carried to the court of appeals. That court, composed by him, like all the others of the Council, was well aware of this repugnance on his part. We may believe he knew how to manage it, and very clear reasons indeed were needed to oblige the court to carry the appeal to the Council. If, in spite of all, the evidence dragged it there, the chancellor, who could not bring himself to pronounce the blasphemy of quashing a decree, was the first to invent a formula which enabled him to pronounce that the decree was *non avenu;* and even then, it was not done without a peroration of defence and moans. All this was plainly subversive of the distribution of justice.

A third evil, derived from the same source, was an attachment to forms, even the most insignificant, so literal, so precise, so servile that all other considerations, even the most evident justice, disappeared to his eyes before some petty formality. Long service at the bar had injured his mind. It was naturally extended and luminous, and endowed with much reading and profound knowledge. The duty of the bar is to gather, examine, weigh, compare the reasons of two or more parties, and to spread out that schedule, if I may so express it, with all the graces and flowers of eloquence before the judges, and with the greatest exactitude, that no point be overlooked, and that none of the numerous auditors shall be able to guess of what opinion the *avocat-général* is before he begins to sum up. This continual habit for twenty-four years, acting on a mind that was scrupulous on equity and on form, fruitful in ideas, learned in law and customs, had brought him to a pitch of indecision from which he could not escape; so that if some limit of time were not absolutely fixed, affairs were prolonged indefinitely. He was the first to suffer from this; it was to him a sort of parturition to make up his mind; but woe to those who had to wait for it.

To such essential defects, which, nevertheless, came chiefly from too much understanding and knowledge and too long a habit at the bar, and were far indeed from detracting from an honour and an uprightness which were only increased by this delicacy of conscience, were joined others that came only from his natural slowness and a too great desire to do well; he could not finish turning the phrase of a declaration, a decree, or even a business letter, however unimportant. He touched and retouched them incessantly. He was the slave of the most exact purity of diction, and never perceived that this servitude made him often obscure, and sometimes unintelligible. His taste for the sciences crowned all these disabilities. He loved languages, especially the classic ones; he took infinite pleasure in all phases of physics and mathematics. Nor was he less of a metaphysician. For all those sciences he had breadth and talent; he loved to dig into them, to make experiments behind closed doors in all the different sciences, with his children and a few obscure *savants*, who each took points of research for the next meeting. In this sort of study he lost a vast deal of time and irritated those who were depending on him and who sometimes had to go to his house a dozen times before they could reach him, through the functions of his office and the amusements of his taste. He was born for the sciences. It is true that he would have made an excellent president of the parliament; but that for which he was best fitted was to be at the head of all literature,—of the Academies, the Observatory, the Royal College and Library; there he would certainly have excelled. His slowness would have troubled no one; his ready difficulties would have helped to clear up questions, and his indecision, independent then of conscience, would have tended to the same end. He would have had to do only with men of letters and not with the world, which he never knew, and, save for politeness, had no usage in.

Enough said, but still one other touch of the brush. The elder Duc de Grammont, who was very shrewd, related to me how, one morning, finding himself in the king's cabinet while the king was at mass, *tête-à-tête* with the chancellor, he asked him, in the course of conversation, if, since he had been chancellor, the great knowledge he must have of chicanery and of long protracted suits, had not made him think of regulating the matter, stopping such rascality, and shortening cases. The chancellor replied that he had thought so much about it that he had begun to draw up a regulation on paper; but as he advanced, he reflected on the great number of *avocats*, *procureurs*, sheriffs, etc., which such a regulation would ruin, and the compassion he had felt made him drop the pen from his hand. For the same reason archers and provosts ought not to arrest thieves or put them in the way of their heads being cut off, which is certainly a greater reason for compassion. In other words, the duration and number of suits make the wealth and the power of lawyers; consequently they should be left to increase and multiply. Here is a long disquisition; but I think it the more useful because it makes plain how a man of so much integrity, talents, and reputation is, little by little, brought, through issuing from his true centre, to make his integrity equivocal and his talents worse than useless, and thus lose his reputation and become at last the plaything of fortune.

It occurs to me that I have forgotten a thing which deserves to be noted for the singularity of the fact, and I shall now record it for fear it may escape me again. One afternoon, as we were about to take our places at the Council of Regency, Maréchal de Villars drew me aside and asked if I knew that Marly was about to be destroyed. I told him no, for in fact I had never heard it mentioned, and I added that I could not believe it. "Then you do not approve it?" said the maréchal. I assured him that I was far from doing so. He repeated that the destruction was resolved upon; that he knew it in a way that left no doubt whatever, and that if I wished to prevent it I had not a moment to lose. I answered, as we were taking our seats, that I would speak of it presently to M. le Duc d'Orléans. "Presently!" exclaimed the maréchal, hastily; "speak to him at once, this very moment, for the order may already have been given."

I prevent the destruction of Marly.

As the whole Council was now seated, I passed behind them to the Duc d'Orléans, to whom I whispered what I had just heard, without saying from whom it came. I said I implored him, if the news were true, to suspend the order until I could speak with him, and I would go to the Palais-Royal as soon as the Council rose. He stammered something as if annoyed at being found out, but agreed to wait. When I reached the Palais-Royal he did not deny the matter. I told him I should not ask who had given him such pernicious advice. He wanted to prove to me that it was good by saving the expense of keeping the place up, and by the product of the aqueducts, materials, furniture, and other things that could be sold; he also mentioned the unsuitableness of the site where the king, at his early age, could not be taken for a number of years. I answered that the reasons presented to him were those of the guardian of a private individual whose conduct should not resemble in any way that of a guardian of a King of France; that he ought to accept the necessity of the expense of keeping up Marly, and consider that it was but an item in those of the king, and put out of his head the proceeds of the materials, because they would certainly disappear in gifts and pillage; moreover, that he ought not to view the matter in this petty way, but consider how many millions had been cast into that old sewer to make it a fairy palace, unique in Europe as to form, still more unique for the beauty of its fountains, unique in the character and reputation that the late king had given to it, making it an object of curiosity to foreigners of all stations who visited France. I told him that this destruction would echo throughout Europe, with such blame that France would be openly insulted for the removal of so remarkable an ornament. Besides which, though neither he nor I was very sensitive as to what had been the taste and occupation of the late king, still he ought to avoid shocking his memory after so long a reign, so many brilliant years, and such great reverses heroically borne. And finally that he ought to remember that all the malcontents would cry murder; that the Duc du Maine, Mme. de Ventadour, and Maréchal de Villeroy would not refrain from making a crime of it to the little king. I saw plainly that he had never made the slightest reflection on all this. He agreed that I was right, promised that nothing should be touched at Marly, and thanked me for having saved him from that blunder. When I was quite sure of this result I said to him: "You must admit that the king would be much astonished if he could know in the other world that the Duc de Noailles had urged you to destroy Marly, and that I was the one to prevent it." "Oh! as for that," he replied quickly, "he would never believe it." Marly was preserved and maintained, and it was Cardinal Fleury who, with the miserliness of a college bursar, robbed it of its river, its greatest charm.

I hastened to give the good news to Maréchal de Villars. The Duc de Noailles was furious at having this economy wrenched from him. In order not to seem totally defeated, he obtained permission (very secretly, for fear that here too he might fail), to sell the furniture and linen, etc. He persuaded the regent, who was shy with him about the retractation of the destruction, that all such things would be spoilt and worthless before the king was of an age to go to Marly; that in selling them quite a relief would still be obtained to the condition of the finances, and that later the king could refurnish the place as he fancied. There were several fine pieces of furniture, and as all the lodgings of the courtiers, the officers, great and small, and the wardrobe people, were supplied with furniture and linen that were the property of the king, there was an immensity to sell; but the sale was small in its results, through favours and pillage, and the replacement of what was sold has since cost several millions. I knew nothing of the sale until after it was begun; therefore I could not prevent this very injurious meanness. Everything was sold at an extremely low price.

Illness of Mme. de Maintenon.

Mme. de Maintenon, forgotten and as though dead, in her beautiful and opulent retreat at Saint-Cyr, was seriously ill at this time, almost without its being known, and wholly without its making any sensation among those who heard of it.

IV.

My prediction at the Council of Regency.

THOUGH the affair of the bull Unigenitus does not enter into these Memoirs, for reasons already given, there are certain facts about it, which either concern me personally or are well-known to me, which ought to find a place here, because I have reason to doubt whether they will find one in the histories of this famous affair, the authors of which may well desire to ignore them. On one of the earlier days of the month of January the matter came up before the Council of Regency. I shall not enlarge on what took place, for I have no intention of dwelling on the subject. I saw a strong inclination to exact a blind submission without explanation or chance to reply; and also that the party now inclining to absolute obedience was increasing steadily. M. de Troyes put himself forward in favour of the bull and the pretensions of Rome, repenting, apparently, that he had hitherto, throughout his life, opposed them.

I was not of his opinion; he grew warm; we both disputed hotly, and he let out his ideas so freely that I remarked that before long that bull would have made its way amazingly, for I saw now that it was getting nearer and nearer to being made an article of faith; whereupon up gets M. de Troyes to declaim against the calumny, declaring that I always went beyond the facts; and from that to showing that the bull could never become either dogma, rule, or article of faith; that even in Rome such a thing had never entered the mind of any one, and that Cardinal Tolomeo, who was all his life a

Jesuit, and as a Jesuit was made cardinal, had laughed in derision whenever that string was touched. When he had made his outcry, I looked round at the council and said: "Messieurs, pray allow me to take you, one and all, to witness as to what I have now predicted about the future of the bull, and all that M. de Troyes has said to prove that it is impossible it can ever be made an article, dogma, or rule of faith, and that Rome herself laughs at the idea; and permit me also to remind you of all this hereafter, when the bull shall have reached the future which, I repeat, will not be long in coming." M. de Troyes cried out again at my absurdity. At the end of six months, and even less, it was shown I was a prophet.

D'Aguesseau reads to Cardinal de Noailles and me a memorial against the bull.

Cardinal de Noailles proposed to me a meeting in his cabinet with d'Aguesseau (still *procureur-général*), in order that we might listen to a memorial which the latter had drawn up against the bull. I went there, the door was closed, we were all three alone, and the reading lasted two hours. The object of the paper was to show that there was no means of receiving a bull so contrary to all the laws of the Church, to the maxims and usages of the kingdom founded on the liberties of the Gallican Church as the Unigenitus; that those liberties themselves are only the observance of canons and rules established from all time in the Church universal; canons which have been maintained in their integrity against the encroachments of the Court of Rome by the Gallican Church alone. Besides the erudition which, without any affectation, was displayed throughout the document, and the beauty of the diction without an effort at eloquence, it was admirable for its tissue of a chain of proofs, the links of which seemed to spring naturally from one another, and carried along the proofs of the whole memorial in an orderly manner which made them clear, and formed an evidence which it was impossible not to accept. It was also restrained within the limits which the primacy of Rome over all other churches could justly require; and was expressed with the proper respect due to the person and dignity of the pope. The conclusion arrived at was to send back to him his bull, having vainly sought and endeavoured to find some way of receiving it, solely induced thereto by the desire to show good-will and respect for the Holy See and the pope. I was charmed with the document, and I showed d'Aguesseau to its fullest extent the impression made upon me. Cardinal de Noailles was no less satisfied. We reasoned it over together before separating. But the misery was that religion and truth were not the rudder of this unhappy affair; just as neither had been the source of it in Rome or in those who had been employed in demanding it, supporting it, and bringing it, for their ambition, to the point where it now was, at the cost of truth, justice, the Church and State, many learned colleges, many illustrious ecclesiastical bodies, — in short, at the cost of a whole people of saints and learned men.

The regent delivered over to the bull Unigenitus.

I knew the weakness of the regent, and (though he was really a believer, in spite of himself) the little account he piqued himself on making of religion. I saw him given over to his enemies in this affair, as in so many others: to the Jesuits, whom he feared; to Maréchal de Villeroy, who had impressed him from his earliest youth, and who, in the most profound ignorance of the real matter, piqued himself on supporting the bull, to make parade of his gratitude to the late king and Mme. de Maintenon; to the Abbé Dubois, who, in his underground darkness, was already groping towards the cardinalate, and seeking to smooth his way with Rome; to the manœuvres of Cardinal de Rohan, the tantrums of Cardinal de Bissy, the rascality of sundry prelates who nursed a soft chimera of attaining to the hat; and, finally, to that fallen cedar, to that unhappy Bishop of Troyes, whose return to the world had gangrened his very vitals, without object, without reason, and against all the notions and lights he had had and maintained throughout his life until he entered the Council of Regency. As for counter-weight, there was none.

The pope, stiffening himself (unlike the usage of his greatest and most saintly predecessors) in the resolve not to give any explanation of his bull, nor suffer the bishops to give any, for fear of undermining his pretended infallibility, but more because he was puzzled how to give any reasonable explanation, or admit any, would only hear of blind obedience; and his nuncio, Bentivoglio, at the head of the Jesuits and Sulpicians, thought the chance too good to abrogate the liberties of the Gallican Church and subject it to the slavery of Rome (like the churches of Italy, Spain, Portugal, and the Indies), to miss the occasion. He began therefore to doff his cap, and those of the Jesuits and Sulpicians, to the bishops, to get them to declare the bull an article of faith.

In this extremity — of the imposition of a new article of faith, destitute of all legitimate authority, because such authority can only be given by the free and general assembly of the Church, to which alone the promise of Jesus Christ to be with it throughout all ages is addressed — the Sorbonne and four bishops thought it was time to have recourse to the last remedy which the Church has provided and approves of her children making use of, in order to suspend proceedings and await times when the truth would be more readily listened to; namely, an appeal to a future free Council-general. Bentivoglio and all the promoters of the bull uttered loud outcries. They felt the importance in itself of this great step; they groaned under the weight of suspended proceedings; they felt the terrible effect upon their enterprise from the consequences of this example, and they stirred up hell to arrest it. The regent, ever ready to be alarmed, easily dragged along by his treacherous confidants, yielded to their demands, and proceeded cruelly against the Sorbonne, and against the four bishops, whom he exiled, and dismissed to their dioceses.

Cardinal de Noailles misses another grand stroke.

It was then that Cardinal de Noailles missed a grand stroke — as he had already missed others. I saw him frequently at his own house and at mine. He came on this occasion to talk the matter over with me. I exhorted him to appeal. He was sure of the Chapters and of the rectors of Paris, of all the principal ecclesiastics, and the most noted and numerous communities, both secular and regular. He was also sure of several bishops who were only waiting his example, and pressed him to give it. I represented to him that he ought by this time to be convinced of the treachery, the craftiness, and the real object of the party which, under a show of obedience to Rome, was forcing the hand of the pope in order to triumph in France, and would never consent to anything but blind obedience. I told him he had shown enough patience, gentleness, moderation, and desire to combine obedience with the truth and liberties of the Gallican Church, and that it was now time to open his eyes, and put a stop to this fury and craft.

I shook him. He confided to me that his appeal was all written and ready; but he thought he ought still to delay the crash in order not to reproach himself with having failed in patience. I could not get him out of that; nor could he allege any better reason than this vague scruple. After a long discussion, I predicted to him that his patience would prove fatal; that in the end he would come to the appeal, but — too late!

Tête-à-tête between the regent and me in his opera-box.

The regent avoided the subject with me, — all the more easily because I never touched upon it, and, with the exception of a few mercies I obtained from him in cases of private persons against whom violence had been extorted from him, I never entered upon the topic with him. But when he was troubled and pressed upon some special point he never could prevent himself from returning to me with perfect openness; and this about matters and things on which his own consciousness and the influence of the people about him made me most open to suspicion in his eyes. So, being pressed and harassed by these appeals and contending furies, he stopped me one afternoon as I was preparing to leave after working with him *tête-à-tête*, as I usually did about twice a week. He said he was going to the Opera, and wanted me to go with him to talk over important matters. "The Opera, monsieur!" I exclaimed; "what a place to talk over business! Talk here as much as you please; or, if you must go to the Opera, very good; and, if you like, I will come back to-morrow." He persisted, and said we could shut ourselves up in his little box, where he went under cover from his own apartment, and where we should be quite as well off, and better too than in his cabinet. In vain I objected; he only laughed, and finally, taking his hat and cane from a sofa with one hand, and me by the arm with the other, he marched me along. On entering his box, he sat down where he told me he usually sat, facing the stage, to which he told me to turn my back that I might sit opposite to him. In this position we were in full view from the stage, the neighbouring boxes, and part of the pit. The opera was just beginning; we only looked a moment into the theatre, which was very full; after which we neither heard nor saw anything until the play was over, so much did our conversation occupy us.

The regent began at once to explain the embarrassment he was in about the appeal urged upon him by parliament, who wanted to make it, also several bishops and the whole second order of the clergy, following the example of the Sorbonne. I listened without interrupting until he had ended, and then I began to reason. Soon after I had begun, he stopped me to observe that the largest number were on the side of the bull, and the smallest for the appeals; that the bull had the pope, most of the bishops, the Jesuits, most of the members of Saint-Sulpice and Saint-Lazare, consequently, an infinite number of confessors, rectors, vicars, scattered through the towns and provinces of the kingdom, who led the people through their consciences; besides the capuchins and a small number of other mendicant friars; and the danger was that all these Unigenitarians might join the King of Spain against him, and, what with intrigues, and Rome behind them, become a great embarrassment. I listened without interrupting, and then I asked him to hear me in turn uninterruptedly. I began by saying that with him I should not argue on religious grounds, though I could not avoid telling him how strange it was to treat of an affair of doctrine and religion with views and means that were purely political, and could only serve to attract God's wrath upon the issue; neither could I avoid reminding him of all that he had thought about the iniquity of the whole thing and the violence of the means used in the days of the late king, and of all that he and I had confided to each other at the time we thought the king would carry the matter to parliament. [After a very long argument, in which the case was laid before the regent] I stopped and said no more, to judge of the impression I had made. It surpassed my expectations, but did not reassure me. I saw a man convinced by the evidence of my argument (he made no difficulty in owning this), at the same time in bonds and unable to free himself. He reasoned on the present state of the matter and the equal objections on both sides; acknowledging, however, the force of what I told him. Here was a man who was truly convinced, and, by his own admission, without reply to any one of the reasons I gave him, and yet in the travail, as it were, of childbirth. We had reached that point when the curtain fell; each of us was surprised and sorry that the play was over. In spite of the hurly-burly produced by the haste of every one to leave the theatre, we still sat on a few moments longer, unable to finish the conversation. I ended by telling him that the nuncio knew him only too well when he said that the last man who spoke to him was the one who spoke the truth; and I warned him he was being watched by persons whom he thought faithful, but who were only faithful to themselves, their views, their interests, their intrigues; and watched as by birds of prey, whose victim he would be if he did not take care.

To return, however, to the appeals; I said but too true to the regent as we left the theatre. He was so watched, by relays of watchers, that they boxed him up. He stopped the appeals and put all his authority into preventing that of the parliament. I contented myself with having convinced him, and I let him alone, without arguing again with a prince whom I knew to be environed in such a way that his pliancy and weakness made him literally incapable of resistance. He became at last all that they wanted, dragged along by their torrent; and that which I predicted happened to him. If he had listened to me — or rather, if he had had any force of character — the bull would have fallen, with all its machinery and its turmoils, the Church of France would have lived in peace, and Rome would have learned from so strong a lesson not to trouble it again with its schemes and its ambitious pretensions.

The regent puts me, against my will, on a committee of finance.

The Duc de Noailles was seeking every expedient in the management of the finances, but more especially some means to put his own administration of them under cover. He worked at a long memorial to be read by him at the Council of Regency, where it was previously announced. I have already remarked, and given examples, that in spite of his intellect, the multitude and mobility of his ideas and views, which successively chased each other off either wholly or in part, made him incapable of concluding any work of his own; neither was he ever satisfied with work done for him, which he would order done over again or (to use his own term) recast. This is why we waited so long for the document after it had been announced and he had prepared us, as much as he could, to admire it. Eight or ten days before it appeared at the Council of Regency the regent spoke to me of it and praised it, having seen certain parts of it. Then he told me that he should form a committee (in those days people talked nothing but English) of certain members of the Council of Regency, before whom the Duc de Noailles wished to explain his administration of the finances at greater length and with more leisure; and also he was desirous of consulting the committee on certain measures that he intended to propose. To all this the regent added that the committee would assemble at the chancellor's house, and he wished me to be a member of it.

I expressed my surprise and repugnance; I reminded the regent of my incapacity about finances, my disgust for such matters, and my relations to the Duc de Noailles; I assured him I should be a person absolutely null on such a committee; one who would understand nothing; whom the others could make believe what they pleased; that I should be perfectly useless and only waste my time; and I implored him to release me. "But," he said, "it is the Duc de Noailles himself who wants you there; he not only asked it, but he urged it." "Monsieur," I replied, "this is folly indeed! Has he forgotten, and you too, how I have ill-treated and abused him, I can't tell how many times, before you in private, and also before the Council of Regency? What fancy can he have for scenes in which he always bends his back and plays a miserable part? And why should you want to multiply them?" I spoke so much, and so well, or at any rate so strongly, that the regent made no reply and talked of other things. I thought myself quit of the danger.

Three or four days after this conversation the Duc de Noailles began the reading of his memorial before the Council of Regency. When he had finished, the Duc d'Orléans, and nearly all present, including the presidents or heads of the various councils, praised it highly. After which the regent, passing his eyes over the assembly, said it only remained to appoint the committee, and then, almost immediately, I heard myself named first. In my surprise I interrupted the regent, and begged him to remember all that I had had the honour to say to him. He answered that he had not forgotten it, but that I should do him a pleasure by belonging to it. I replied that I should be entirely useless, because I positively could not understand finances, and I begged him to excuse me. "Monsieur," he replied in a kindly tone, but the tone of a regent — it was the only time he ever took it to me, — "I beg you to belong to it, and, since I am forced to say it, I command you to do so." I bowed low over the table, inwardly very angry, and replied, "Monsieur, you are the master; I can only obey you; but at least you will allow me to declare before these gentlemen my repugnance, and make a public admission of my incapacity as to finances, and my consequent uselessness on this committee." The regent let me finish, then, without saying more he proceeded to name the Duc de La Force, Maréchal de Villeroy, the Duc de Noailles, Maréchal de Besons, Pelletier-Sousy, the Archbishop of Bordeaux, and the Marquis d'Effiat.

Not being able to avoid this bomb-shell, in spite of all that I had done, I thought I had better not show annoyance and give that pleasure to the Duc de Noailles, nor get my ears pulled for lack of assiduity at the committee and punctuality to the hours. We assembled three or four times a week between three and four o'clock, and the session rarely lasted less than three hours. As the committee continued for over three months I shall not say more here, but will return to it later.

I cause the purchase of the diamond afterwards called "the Regent."

By an extremely rare chance a man employed in the diamond mines of the Great Mogul found means to insert one of enormous size into his rectum; and what is more remarkable still, he reached the coast and was allowed to embark without the precaution invariably taken with all passengers whose name and place of employment are not known, namely, that of giving them a purgative and an injection, to recover whatever they might have swallowed or hidden. Apparently he was not suspected of having been to the mines, or of having any dealings in precious stones. As a crown of good luck, he reached Europe safely with his diamond. He showed it to several princes, whose wealth was not sufficient for the purchase. Then he took it to England, where the king admired it, but could not resolve to buy it. A crystal model of it was made in England; and the man, the model, and the diamond were despatched to Law, who proposed to the regent to buy the stone. The price alarmed the regent, and he refused.

Law, who thought on a large scale about many things, came to me quite disturbed, and brought the model. I thought, as he did, that it did not become the grandeur of the King of France to be deterred by the cost from purchasing a thing unique in the world and quite inestimable; and the more other potentates had not dared to think of it, the more we should be careful not to let it escape us. Law, delighted that I should think in that way, begged me to speak to the Duc d'Orléans. The state of the finances was an obstacle on which the regent insisted strongly. He feared blame for making so large a purchase while there was so much difficulty in meeting pressing necessities, and such numbers of people were suffering. I praised that sentiment; but I told him he ought not to use it for the greatest king in Europe as he would for a private individual, who would be very reprehensible indeed to give a hundred thousand francs for his own adornment if he owed debts and had not the wherewithal to pay them. I said he ought to consider the honour of the crown, and not throw away this unique opportunity of obtaining a priceless stone, which eclipsed all others in Europe; I also said it would be a glory for his regency which would always last; and that no matter what was the state of the finances, this amount of saving would not help them much. In short, I did not leave the Duc d'Orléans until I had obtained from him a promise to purchase the diamond.

Law, before speaking to me, had said so much to the merchant about the impossibility of selling the stone for the price he asked, and the injury and loss in cutting it up, that he brought him down at last to two millions of francs, with the parings that would come from cutting. The bargain was concluded on those terms. The man was paid the interest on two millions until they could give him the principal, with possession of two millions of precious stones as security; which he was to keep until payment in full of the two millions in money was made to him.

The Duc d'Orléans was agreeably disappointed by the applause which the public gave to this fine and unique acquisition. The diamond was called "the Regent." It is the size of a Reine Claude plum, almost round in shape, of a thickness equal to its width, perfectly white, free from all blemish, cloud, or speck, of admirable water, and weighing more than five hundred *grains.* I congratulated myself much on having induced the regent to make so illustrious a purchase.[1]

The czar, Peter I., comes to France.

Peter I., Czar of Moscovy, has justly made himself so great a name in his own land and throughout all Europe and Asia that I shall not undertake to make known a prince so great, so illustrious, comparable only to the greatest men of antiquity, who has made himself the admiration of the age, and will be that of centuries still to come. The singularity of a journey to France by a prince so extraordinary seems to me an event that deserves to be unforgotten, the narration of which should not be interrupted. For this reason I place it here, a little later than it ought to be in the order of time, but the dates will rectify this error.

We have seen that he wished to come to France in the last years of the late king, who civilly evaded his visit. That obstacle no longer existing, he again wished to gratify his curiosity, and sent word to the regent through Prince

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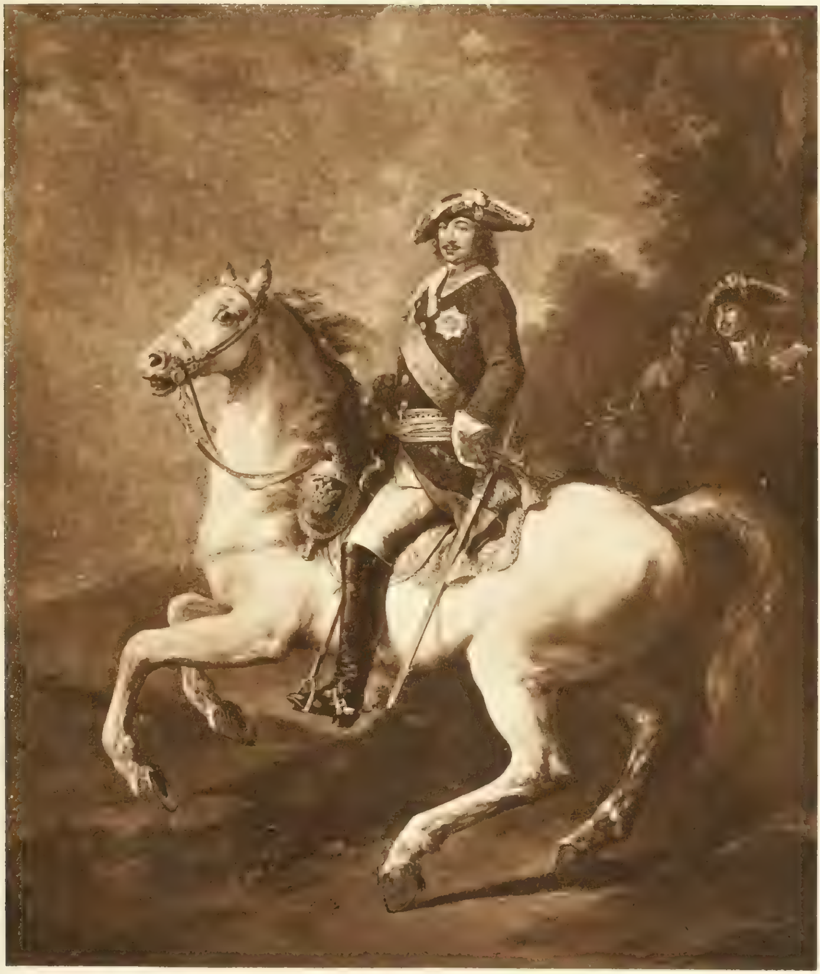
[1] It is now improperly called the "Pitt diamond." — Tr.

Kurakin, his ambassador here, that he was about to leave Holland to come and see the king. There was nothing to do but to seem pleased, though the regent would willingly have been spared the visit. The expense of it was great; the awkwardness not less so, with a prince so powerful and so clear-sighted, but so full of fancies, with the remains of barbarism about him, and accompanied by an immense suite of persons whose behaviour was very different from that of our own people, and who were full of caprices and strange habits, — and their master and themselves very sensitive and very exacting about what they thought their due and their rights. Moreover, the czar was at open enmity with the King of England, — an enmity that went to the verge of indecency, and was all the more bitter because it was personal. This was a thing that harassed the regent not a little, because his own intimacy with the King of England was public, and had been brought about by the personal interests of the Abbé Dubois, also to the verge of indecency. The dominant passion of the czar was to make his country flourishing through commerce. He had made a great number of canals to facilitate this. There was one for which he needed the concurrence of the King of England, because it had to cross a little corner of his German States. Commercial jealousy kept George from consenting. Peter, engaged in the war with Poland, then in that of the North, in which George also took part, requested this compliance in vain. That was the source of their hatred, which lasted all their lives with the utmost bitterness.

Motives of the czar for wishing to become a Catholic.

This great monarch, who wanted to draw both himself and his country out of barbarism, and extend his power by conquests and treaties, had seen the necessity of marriages to ally him with the first potentates of Europe. This reason made the Catholic



Peter the Great

religion necessary to him, — that religion being so little separated from the Greek faith that he thought there would be no difficulty in getting it received among his people, leaving them, however, entire liberty of conscience. But this intelligent prince was sufficiently intelligent to desire to be fully enlightened beforehand as to Roman pretensions. For this purpose he sent to Rome an obscure man, though one who was capable of informing himself, who, after passing six months in that city, brought back to him nothing satisfactory. The czar unbosomed himself on the matter in Holland to King William, who dissuaded him from his purpose and advised him to imitate England and make himself the head of the religion of his own country, without which he would never be really master of it. This advice pleased the czar, all the more because it was through the wealth and authority of the patriarchs of Moscow, his grandfather and his great-grandfather, that his father had obtained the crown, although of ordinary condition among the Russian nobility.

Nevertheless, the passion to open to his posterity the means of making marriages with Catholic princes, above all, the honcur of allying it to the houses of France and Austria, made him return after a while to his first project. He persuaded himself that the man he had sent secretly to Rome was not well-informed, or had not understood the matter; he resolved to fathom his doubts, so that none might remain as to the course he ought to take. With this design he fixed on Prince Kurakin, whose intelligence and insight were well known to him, to go to Rome under pretence of travelling for curiosity, — believing that a seigneur of his quality would obtain an entrance to all that was best, most important, and most distinguished in Rome; and also that by living there under pretext of loving the life, wishing to see all at his ease, and to admire the marvels of all kinds there collected, he would have leisure and opportunity to become well informed on all that the czar was desirous of knowing. Kurakin stayed in Rome three years, mingling with learned men on the one hand and the very best society on the other, from whom, little by little, he drew all that he wanted to know, with the more facility because that Court openly triumphs in its temporal pretensions and its conquests in that line, instead of holding them secretly. At the long and faithful report which Kurakin made to his master the czar heaved a sigh, saying that he must be master in his own land and could not put it in the power of any one who was greater; after that he never thought again of making himself a Catholic.

That is the good that popes and their Court do to the Church, the good that these vicars of Jesus Christ procure for the souls whom He redeemed, and of whom they ought to be the great pastors; souls for which they have to answer to the Sovereign Pastor, who declared to Saint Peter and the other apostles that his kingdom was not of this world; and who asked those two brothers, when they wanted him to judge of their quarrel about their heritage, "Who made me a judge in such matters over you?" — and would do no good work for them except to reconcile those brothers, in order to teach pastors and priests by so great and clear an example that they not only have no power and no rights over the temporal for any reasons whatsoever, but that they are especially excluded from them.

This fact about the czar and Rome, Prince Kurakin did not conceal. All who knew it heard it from him; I often dined with him and he with me, and have talked with him and heard him, with pleasure, discourse of this and many other things.

The regent, informed by Kurakin of the czar's approaching arrival in France by the maritime coast, sent the king's equipages, horses, carriages, coaches, fourgons, tables, and beds, with du Libois, one of the king's gentlemen-in-ordinary, to await the czar at Dunkerque, pay all expenses to Paris for himself and suite, and to show him the same honours as to the king himself. The czar proposed to give a hundred days to the trip. The apartment of the queen-mother at the Louvre was furnished for him. The regent discussing with me the man of rank he had better choose to attend the czar during the time of his visit, I suggested Maréchal de Tessé, as a man who had nothing to do, was well versed in the language and usages of the world, knew much of foreigners through his travels in Spain and Italy, and was very gentle and polite. The regent thought I was right, sent for him the next day, and gave him his orders. The hôtel de Lesdiguières was also prepared for the czar and his suite, under the supposition that he might prefer a private house, with all his people around him, to the Louvre.

His arrival in Paris.

The czar arrived on Friday, May 7, and reached the Louvre at nine in the evening. He went all over the apartment of the queen-mother, thought it too magnificently furnished and too light, and immediately got back into the carriage and drove to the hôtel de Lesdiguières, where he preferred to lodge. He thought the apartment prepared for him also too fine, and ordered his camp-bed to be set up in a dressing-room. Maréchal de Tessé, who was to do the honours of the house and table and accompany him wherever he went, had much ado to follow him, and even to rush after him.

The monarch excited wonder by his extreme curiosity, which always related to his ideas of government, commerce, education, police; and this curiosity looked into everything and despised nothing, however slight, that had consistent, evident, and wise utility; he esteemed only that which deserved esteem; in which he showed the intelligence, discrimination, and quick apprehension of his mind. Everything about him proved the wide extent of his ideas and something that was unfailingly consistent. He allied, in a manner altogether surprising, the loftiest, proudest, most sensitive, sustained, and at the same time least embarrassing majesty with a politeness that made itself felt at all times, though still as the master. He had a sort of familiarity which came from liberty; but he was not exempt from a strong tincture of the ancient barbarism of his country, which made his manners quick, even precipitate, his whims uncertain, and himself incapable of enduring restraint or contradiction to any of them. His meals were often scarcely decent; still less what followed them, often with a betrayal of the audacity of a king who felt himself everywhere at home. What he desired to see or do was always in perfect independence of the means of accomplishment, which had to be forced to his pleasure at a word. The desire to see at his ease, the annoyance of being made a spectacle, the habit of liberty in all things, made him often prefer a hired carriage, even a *fiacre*. He would jump into the first vehicle that came in his way, belonging often to people who had come to his house, and order the coachman to drive him about town or into the country. This happened to Mme. de Matignon, who had gone to gape at him, and was much astonished to find herself obliged to go home on foot; for he took her carriage to Boulogne and other places in the country. At such times Maréchal de Tessé and his suite, from whom he was often escaping, had to fly after him, often not finding him.

Great qualities of the czar.

His face, clothes, and food.

He was a very tall man, very well made, rather thin, the face somewhat round; a grand forehead; beautiful eyebrows; the nose a little short, but not too much so, thick at the end; lips rather thick; complexion brown and ruddy; very fine black eyes, large, vivid, piercing, and well-shaped; his glance majestic, and gracious when he meant it to be so, otherwise stern and fierce; and with all this a tic, which was not frequent but convulsed his eyes and his whole face and was very alarming. It lasted a moment, with a wandering, terrible look, and then he recovered immediately. His whole air showed his mind, his reflection, his grandeur, and was not without a certain grace. He never wore any but a linen collar, a round, brown wig, without powder, which did not touch his shoulders, a brown coat tight to the body, plain, with gold buttons, waistcoat, breeches and stockings, no gloves and no cuffs; the star of his order on his coat and the ribbon across it, the coat itself often unbuttoned; his hat on a table, never on his head, even out of doors. In this simplicity, however ill-attended or ill-vehicled he might be, it was impossible to mistake the air of grandeur that was natural to him.

What he ate and drank at two regular meals is inconceivable, — not counting all the beer he swallowed, and the lemonade and other kinds of drink between meals; and all his suite much more. A bottle or two of beer, as much and sometimes more of wine, liqueur-wines on that, and, at the end of the meal, prepared brandy, half a pint, sometimes a whole pint; this was about the ordinary amount he drank at each meal, but his suite while at table swallowed more, and were eating besides from eleven in the morning till eight at night. There was a priest-almoner who dined at the table of the czar and ate half as much again as any of them; which amused the czar, who was fond of him, very much. Prince

Kurakin went every day to the hôtel de Lesdiguières, but he lodged at home.

The czar understood French very well, and could, I think, have spoken it had he chosen; but, out of grandeur, he had an interpreter. As for Latin and other languages, he spoke them very well. He had a guard-room and a company of the king's guards, but he would never let them follow him out of doors. He would not leave the house, no matter how great his curiosity was, or give any sign of life, until he had received a visit from the king.

Saturday morning, the day after his arrival, the regent went to see him. The monarch came out of his cabinet, made a few steps towards him, embraced him with a great air of superiority, pointed to the door of his cabinet, and turning instantly, without any civility, entered it first himself. The regent followed, and Prince Kurakin after him. The conversation lasted an hour, without a word on public affairs; then the czar left his cabinet, the regent after him, and then the latter, with a profound bow, only half returned, took leave.

Journal of the czar's visit.

The following Monday, May 10, the king went to see the czar, who received him at the carriage door, saw him get out, and walked before him, on the king's left side, to his room, where there were two armchairs. The king sat down in the one to the right, the czar in the one to the left. Prince Kurakin served as interpreter. Every one had been astonished to see the czar pick up the king under his two arms, lift him to the level of his face, and kiss him, as it were, in the air, while the king, young as he was, who could not have been prepared for this, was not the least frightened. People were also struck with the graces he showed before the king, the air of tenderness he had for him, and a politeness that seemed to come from his heart, though always mingled with grandeur, claims of equal rank, and, slightly, of superiority of rank; all of which he made distinctly felt. He praised the king and seemed charmed with him. He kissed him several times. The king made his short little compliment very prettily; and the Duc du Maine and the Maréchal de Villeroy and other distinguished persons who were present supplied the conversation.

Tuesday, May 11, the czar returned the king's visit, with the same ceremonial, between four and five o'clock. He had already gone as early as eight in the morning to see the Places Royale, des Victoires, and Vendôme, and the next day he went to the Observatoire, the manufactory of the Gobelins, and the Jardin du Roi for simples. Wherever he went, he examined everything and asked many questions.

Friday, 14th, he went at six o'clock in the morning to the great gallery of the Louvre to see the plans in relief of all the king's fortresses. The Maréchal de Villars was there with several lieutenant-generals to explain them. He examined the plans a long time; then he visited many parts of the Louvre, and descended afterwards into the gardens of the Tuileries, which the public had been made to leave. They were working then on the Pont Tournant. He examined that work minutely and stayed there a long time. In the evening the Duc d'Orléans came to take him to the Opera in the state box; the two alone in the front seats. After a time the czar asked if there would be no beer. It was immediately brought in a great goblet in a saucer. The regent rose, took it, and presented it to the czar, who with a smile and a bow of politeness, took the goblet, drank it off, and then without any ceremony put it back on the saucer which the regent still held. At the fourth act he went away to supper, but would not let the regent follow. The next day he threw himself into a hired coach and went to see matters of interest among workmen.

May 16, Whitsunday, he went to the Invalides where he wanted to see and examine everything. In the refectory he tasted the soldiers' soup and their wine, drank to their health, slapping them on the shoulder and calling them comrades. He admired the church, the dispensary, the infirmary, and seemed charmed with the order of the establishment. Maréchal de Villars did the honours.

Wednesday, 19th, he busied himself with workmen, and various work. The Duchesse de Berry and the Duchesse d'Orléans sent their equerries to compliment him. They had both hoped for a compliment themselves, or even a visit. The czar replied that he would go and thank them. He was displeased that the princes of the blood made a difficulty of going to see him unless they were assured that he would pay a visit to the princesses of the blood. This he rejected with great haughtiness, so that none of them saw him except, to gratify their curiosity, in the streets.

Monday, 24th, he went to the Tuileries early before the king was up. Maréchal de Villeroy showed him the crown jewels. He thought them very fine and many more than he expected, but said he knew nothing about such things. He made rather a point of not caring for beauty that was purely of wealth and imagination; especially such as he could not himself attain. Then he went to see the king, who met him half-way, in Maréchal de Villeroy's apartment. This was arranged so as to seem an accidental visit without ceremony. The king held a roll of paper in his hand and gave it to the czar, telling him it was a map of his States. This little gallantry pleased the czar immensely. His politeness and air of affection and friendship were the same as before, but always with majesty and equality.

After dinner he went to Versailles, where Maréchal de Tessé left him to the Duc d'Antin, charging him to do the honours. Tuesday, 25th, he roamed all over the gardens and sailed on the grand canal, very early in the morning before d'Antin came to him. He saw all Versailles, Trianon, and the Menagerie. His principal suite were lodged in the château. They brought with them ladies, who slept in the apartment of Mme. de Maintenon. Bloin, governor of the château, was extremely scandalized at such a profanation of that temple of prudery, of which the goddess and he, now aged, would have thought much less in former days.

Goes to Versailles and sees Trianon and Marly.

Sunday, May 30, he went to Fontainebleau, where he slept; the next day to hunt the stag, with the Comte de Toulouse to do the honours. The place did not please him much, and the hunt not at all, for he nearly fell from his horse; he thought the exercise too violent, and he really knew nothing of hunting. He chose to dine alone with his own people on the Île de l'Étang, where they made amends to themselves for their fatigues. He returned alone in a carriage with three of his people. It appeared in that carriage that they had eaten largely and drunk much.

Friday, June 11, he went from Versailles to Saint-Cyr, where he saw the whole establishment and the young ladies in their classes. He was received like the king. He wished to see Mme. de Maintenon, who, apprehensive of this curiosity, went to bed, with all her curtains closed except one that was only half open. The czar entered her room, went to the windows and pulled back the curtains on arriving, and immediately after those of the bed; gazed at Mme. de Maintenon at his ease, said not a word to her, nor she to him, and without making her any sort of bow went away. I heard afterwards

Makes Mme. de Maintenon an insulting visit.

that she was much astonished and still more mortified; but Louis XIV. was no longer living. The czar returned to Paris Saturday, June 12.

I go to see the czar at d'Antin's house.

Tuesday, June 15, he went early to d'Antin's house in Paris. Working that day with the regent, I finished in half an hour; he was surprised and wanted to detain me. I told him that I could always have the honour of seeing him, but not the czar, who was going away and whom I had not yet seen, and therefore I was going to d'Antin's house to gape at my ease. No one was to be there but invited guests and a few ladies with Mme. la Duchesse and her daughters, who were also going to gape. I entered the garden where the czar was walking about. Maréchal de Tessé saw me from afar and came to me, expecting to present me. I begged him not to do so, and not to seem even to notice me in the czar's presence, because I wanted to look at him wholly at my ease, to hover about him and wait as long as I liked to contemplate him, which I could not do if I was known. I begged him to tell d'Antin the same thing; and, with that precaution, I satisfied my curiosity as I pleased. I found him rather talkative, but always as being in everything the master. He entered a cabinet, where d'Antin showed him various plans and curiosities, about which he asked many questions. It was there that I saw the tic I mentioned. I asked Tessé if it happened often; he said yes, several times a day, especially when he was not on the watch to control himself. Returning to the garden, d'Antin had the windows of the ground-floor apartment thrown open, and told him that Mme. la Duchesse and other ladies were there and had a great desire to see him. He made no answer, but allowed himself to be conducted past the house. He walked slower, turned his head to the apartment, where they were all standing and under arms, but as sight-seers. He looked at them well, made a very slight inclination of the head to the whole party and passed haughtily on. I think from the way he received other ladies he would have shown more politeness to these if Mme. la Duchesse had not been there; he was displeased by the pretension of the princesses of the blood about his visit. I was there about an hour and did not cease looking at him. In the end I saw that he noticed it, and that made me more cautious in the fear that he would ask who I was.

The king gave him two magnificent Gobelins tapestries. He wanted also to give him a beautiful sword with diamonds, which the czar excused himself from accepting. On his side, he distributed about sixty thousand francs to the king's servants who had waited on him, and gave d'Antin and the Maréchals de Tessé and d'Estrées each his portrait set in diamonds, five gold medals, and eleven silver ones, relating to the principal actions of his life.

Wednesday, June 16, he was on horseback at a review of the two regiments of the guards, the gendarmes, the light-horse cavalry, and the mousquetaires. No one was with him but the Duc d'Orléans. He scarcely looked at the troops, and they perceived it.

His departure; his pain at the luxury of France; his prophecy.

Friday, June 18, the regent went early to the hôtel de Lesdiguières to take leave of the czar, and was some time with him. After this visit, the czar went to the Tuileries to bid adieu to the king; by agreement there was no ceremony. It would have been impossible to show more intelligence, grace, and tenderness for the king than the czar displayed on all these occasions. The luxury he saw surprised him much; he was much moved on parting with the king and with France, and said he saw with grief that luxury would prove her destruction. He went away, charmed with the manner in which he had been received, with all that he had seen, the liberty he had enjoyed, and showing a great desire to unite himself closely with the king, to which the interests of the Abbé Dubois and England proved a fatal obstacle, for which the country has often had, and still has, great reason to repent.

His passionate desire to unite himself with France.

One can never finish about this czar, so essentially and truly great; whose singularity and rare variety of great talents and many grandeurs will always make him a monarch worthy of admiration to even remote posterity, in spite of the great defects of barbarism in his origin, his native country, and education. This is the reputation he left behind him in France, which regarded him as a wonder, with whom she has ever since remained fascinated. The czar had a passionate desire to unite himself with France. Nothing could have been better for our commerce, and for our consideration in the North, in Germany, and indeed throughout Europe. This prince held England in a leash through her commerce, and King George in fear for his German States. He also held Holland to great respect, and the emperor to circumspection. It cannot be denied that his was a great figure in Europe and Asia, and that France would have profited infinitely by a closer alliance with him. He did not like the emperor; he wished to loosen little by little our dependence on England; and it was England which made us deaf to his invitations, even to incivility. In vain I pressed the regent on this point, and gave him reasons, of which he felt the full force, and to which he could make no reply. But by this time his bewitchment with the Abbé Dubois, aided by d'Effiat, Canillac, and the Duc de Noailles, was stronger than reasons. Since then we have indeed had cause for long repentance over the fatal charms of

England, and the foolish contempt with which we treated Russia. The evils that resulted have never ceased; and we have now opened our eyes only to see clearly the irreparable ruin sealed by the ministry of M. le Duc, followed by that of Cardinal Fleury.

When Prince Kurakin was in Rome (for reasons already explained), he had led the pope to hope that the czar would grant free exercise to the Catholic religion in Russia. The pope believed that Bentivoglio could obtain this by speaking to the czar, but thinking that the latter's stay in Paris would be too short to consummate an agreement, he told Bentivoglio to induce him to receive a nuncio at the Russian Court, with or without that character. The pope, however, did not wish the negotiation to be carried on in Paris under the regent's eye without informing the latter of what was going on. He therefore directed Bentivoglio to tell the regent, but to say nothing of certain secret orders he had sent him to induce the czar to join with the emperor in a war against the Turks.

Why he did not become a Catholic.

The czar meantime had told Maréchal de Tessé that he was not averse to recognizing the pope, as the head orthodox patriarch; but that he would never consent to a certain subjection which the Court of Rome assumed to impose on princes to the prejudice of their sovereignty; that he was very willing to believe the pope infallible, but only as the head of the Council-general. The fact is, truth and reason are of all lands, and this monarch, still almost a barbarian, was teaching us an excellent lesson.

Choice lesson of Maréchal de Villeroy to the king.

During the fête of Saint Louis, the orchestra of the Opera is accustomed to give the gratuitous entertainment of a fine concert in the Garden of the Tuileries. The presence of the king in that palace drew a greater crowd than usual this year, in the hope of seeing him appear on the terraces, which are on a level with the royal apartments. A marked increase of zeal and loyalty was visible, shown by the number of those who flocked into the gardens, and also into the courtyards on the other side of the palace. They did not leave one vacant space, either on the ground and at the windows, or on all the roofs that commanded a view of the Tuileries. The Maréchal de Villeroy had the greatest difficulty in persuading the king to show himself, first on the garden side and then towards the courtyard, where, as soon as he appeared, the cries of "Vive le roi!" resounded on all sides. The maréchal, making the king take notice of this enormous multitude, said to him sententiously: "See, my master, see this people, this influx, this vast number of persons, — all are yours, you are their master;" and this lesson he repeated again and again to impress it well upon him. He was afraid, apparently, lest he should grow up ignorant of his power. The admirable dauphin, his father, had received very different lessons, by which he profited. He was deeply convinced that while power is given to kings to command and govern, the peoples do not belong to kings, but kings to their people, to do them justice, to make them live according to laws, to render them happy by the equity, wisdom, gentleness, and moderation of their government. That is what I have often heard him say with effusion of heart and inward conviction, in the desire and firm resolution to conduct himself accordingly, not only in private when I was working with him for the future of such principles, but openly in the salon at Marly, to the admiration and delight of those who heard him.

An amusement suited to the king's age made a serious quarrel about this time. A tent had been set up for him on the terrace of the Tuileries, before his apartment and on a level with it. The games of kings have always some distinction attached to them. He took it into his head to have medals, and give them to the courtiers of his own age whom he wished to favour; and these medals, when possessed, gave the right to enter the tent without being otherwise invited. This was called the "Order of the Pavilion." The Maréchal de Villeroy gave directions to Lefèvre to make the medals. He obeyed and brought them to the maréchal, who presented them to the king. Lefèvre was silversmith to the king's household, and, as such, under the orders of the gentlemen of the Bedchamber. The Duc de Mortemart, who was one of the latter, was on duty. He had had several squabbles already with Maréchal de Villeroy. He now declared that it was for himself to order the medals, and present them to the king. He was very angry that all was done without his knowledge, and he carried his complaint to the regent. It was the merest trifle and not worth notice; not one of the three other gentlemen of the Bedchamber took any part in the matter. The Duc d'Orléans, with his customary *mezzo-termine*, said that Lefèvre had not made and carried the medals to the maréchal as silversmith to the king's household, but as having received through the maréchal an order from the king, and that no one was to say anything more about it. The Duc de Mortemart was incensed, and did not restrain his tongue about the maréchal.

Quarrel about the medals.

The Abbé Dubois, on a recent visit to England, had found the Prince of Wales arrested and confined to his own apartment, without being allowed to see any one but his necessary attendant. He wrote two letters to the king, his father, which irritated the latter still more, so that he sent an order to the prince, on receiving the second, to leave the palace. He was lodged

Hatred of the King of England to the Prince of Wales.

by Lord Lumley in London, and soon after established himself a few miles from London in the little village of Richmond. All Europe had known of the horrible catastrophe of Count Königsmarck, whom George, at that time Duke of Hanover, had caused to be flung into a hot oven, at the same time putting the duchess, his wife, into a castle carefully guarded, where she had little or no liberty until George was made King of England. This prince could not endure his son, under the conviction that he was not his own; and the son could not endure the father, from anger and vexation at this conviction, continually and openly marked, and from indignation at the cruel treatment shown to his mother. His wife, Charlotte of Brandebourg-Anspach, was a princess of spirit, affable, virtuous, and extremely liked in England, standing very well with her husband and also with her father-in-law, between whom she constantly put herself. The King of England offered to let her continue to live in the palace with her children, but she preferred to follow her husband.

V

Committee on finance; my proposal for reform.

The finance committee, which met several times a week, kept on its way. The Duc de Noailles presented, as he wished, the present state of the finances, showed their embarrassments, offered expedients, and read memoranda. I was there, as I have said, against my will; and this financial language, of which they have managed to make a science that is Greek to others, invented to hide knowledge from those who are not initiated into it, and whom magistrates, negotiators, and bankers wish to keep in the dark, — this language, I say, was totally unknown to me. Nevertheless, as my constant maxim has ever been that personal inclination should be banished from public affairs, together with over-respect for persons and things and prejudice, I listened with all my ears, in spite of my dislike of the subject; and what I did not understand I was not ashamed to acknowledge and ask to have explained to me. This was the result of my avowal of ignorance in finance, which I had made so plain at the Council of Regency when trying to excuse myself from being on this committee.

It happened quite often that, there being diversity of opinions and sometimes rather sharp ones, I found myself on the side of the Duc de Noailles, and that I argued hotly in support of him. The chancellor afterwards complimented me on this. The Duc d'Orléans, to whom they both told it, assured them he was not at all surprised, but he did not fail to let me know his satisfaction. I said to him, and also to the chancellor, that the opinion of the Duc de Noailles, good or bad, and his individual person, were to me two things absolutely distinct and separate; that I sought for the good and the true, and attached myself to them wherever I thought I found them, just as I stiffened myself against whatever I thought opposed to them; that in this latter case it might be that I should speak harder and firmer if it were the opinion of the Duc de Noailles that I was fighting; but also I could be of his opinion without repugnance when I thought it good, and at such times I rose to support him strongly for the good and the true when I saw him attacked, without, for all that, changing my feelings as to him personally.

The work of the committee coming to an end, and nearly all the opinions agreeing on each point, I went to see the chancellor in private, and told him I came to communicate an idea I had not liked to risk in the committee, and to reason about it with him, and, if he thought it good, to propose it, he and I, to the regent; if not, to forget all about it. I told him that, worried to see the difficulty which there was, even in these times of peace, in making the king's receipts equal his expenses, I thought it would be well to reduce the gendarmerie, the light-horse of the guard, and the two companies of mousquetaires, increasing by two brigades each the four companies of the body-guard.

The chancellor liked all the reasons that I gave him exceedingly. But when we came to discuss, not the means of convincing the regent, because the evidence was palpable, but the execution of this reform, we both agreed that we should never succeed in inspiring him with sufficient resolution; or, if he did, against our expectation, undertake it, the outcries and factions of interested parties would never let him execute it. This amazing weakness, which constantly ruined a regency that might have been so fine, so useful to the kingdom, so glorious for the regent, the results of which could have been in all ways of such great advantage to the nation, was the continual obstacle to all good, and a perpetual cause of sorrow to those who sincerely desired the well-being of the State and the glory of the regent. We finally admitted, the chancellor and I, that if we proposed to the regent so useful a reform it would never be accomplished, and that all the results we should get for our zeal would be the hatred of interested parties. This consideration closed our lips, and the matter was known only to ourselves.

Resolutions of the committee made into an edict.

The long and wearisome work of the committee was over; it assembled several times in the regent's cabinet, where the final resolutions were passed unanimously. The principal ones were: that the *rentes* of the Hôtel de Ville [government securities] should not be meddled with; that the tithe tax should be taken off, as much to keep the promise, solemnly made at the time it was imposed, to suppress it in times of peace, as because, in point of fact, very little was really derived from it. The grant of one million and two hundred thousand francs a year to the building account was reduced to one-half; several withdrawals of pensions uselessly given, and reduction of others were made; the king's private money, of ten thousand francs a month, and his wardrobe, of thirty-six thousand, were reduced, the first to half, the second to twenty-four thousand francs. At the king's present age the latter went chiefly in pillage. There were several other things cut down, and a diminution of interest decreed on the sums borrowed at four per cent. The chiefs and presidents of all the councils were summoned to a special meeting, at which the Duc de Noailles rendered an account of what had been agreed to in the committee. It was voted that an edict in conformity thereto should be drawn up and sent to parliament to be enregistered.

This seemed to the parliament too fine an opportunity to be lost. Messieurs declared that they must see a detailed account of the revenues and expenses of the king before they could decide to enregister the edict. The president went to report this difficulty to the regent, who, the next day, received a deputation from the parliament, to whom he said that he should allow no attack on the royal authority as long as he was the guardian of it. Parliament assembled soon after and registered the suppression of the tithe, of various extortions, and some of the other articles. As for those that remained, the Duc d'Orléans had the weakness, instigated by the fright of the Duc de Noailles and his own desire to court the parliament, to have them discussed between the duke and the fourteen members of the deputation in his presence. This took place on Sunday, September 5, on which occasion the regent brought in the Sieur Law, that he might explain the advantages that could be derived from the Company of the Mississippi. Of all this, not a word to the Council of Regency, still less to me privately; therefore I, on my side, said not a word to the Duc d'Orléans, as, indeed, my custom was in relation to parliament.

Manœuvre of the Duc de Noailles in regard to Law.

The Duc de Noailles, jealous of the confidence the regent felt in Law and of the great success of his bank, did all he could to trouble it. Law went quietly on, but he sometimes complained of this, modestly. Noailles, who wanted to be rid of him, so as to be fully master of all the finances himself, set all machines at work to overthrow him. The bank was by this time one of the chief means to keep matters going. The regent therefore wanted the pair reconciled. Law was ready in all good faith, and as the Duc de Noailles could not well draw back he made the finest pretence of reconciliation externally. Precisely at this lucky moment Mornay died, very suddenly. He was lieutenant-general, and also governor and captain of Saint-Germain. Noailles, alert to all things, heard of this death on waking, and rushed instantly to the Duc d'Orléans to ask for the post, which was given to him immediately. My father had had it. I did not hear of Mornay's death till the afternoon, and, at the same time, of Noailles' activity. It was not easy to get up earlier than he.

Nevertheless, Noailles, always jealous of Law, went on troubling his bank and his schemes. Not only did he bar Law's way by the manœuvres and authority of his office in the finances, but he stirred up against him in the councils and in parliament all the opponents that he could, and among them they often stopped and even frustrated plans that were perfectly reasonable. Law, who, as I have explained, came to see me every Tuesday morning, was continually complaining of this, and showing me the injury that this perpetual thwarting was doing to the business of the bank. I have often owned my incapacity in the matter of finances; but there are things that sometimes depend on good sense more than on knowledge; and Law, with his strong Scotch accent, had the rare gift of explaining himself in so plain, and clear, and intelligible a way that he could not fail to be perfectly understood and comprehended. The Duc d'Orléans liked him and enjoyed him. He looked upon him and all that he did as the work of his own creation. Moreover, he loved unusual and indirect ways, and he clung to him the more eagerly because he saw the necessary resources of the State and the ordinary operations of finances failing him. Law was an independent side, and this side pleased the regent; but Noailles, who wanted to govern him and so reach the post of prime minister (of which he never lost sight or hope), found in Law a serious obstacle on his own ground — he, who encroached as much as he could on the ground of others.

Intimacy between Dubois and Law; its cause.

The Abbé Dubois, always seeking to recover himself in the mind of the Duc d'Orléans, needed outside support, and had no sooner obtained it by his negotiations with England and Holland than the persons he had used became suspected by him as soon as his influence no longer needed theirs. His aim also was the post of prime minister; and he did not want opponents or competitors. The one he feared most was the Duc de Noailles; and he resolved to get rid of him early, without showing anything personally against him. He therefore allied himself with Law; their interests in forming this union were the same. What passed in this respect was in a darkness that all Noailles' art could not penetrate.

Law did not conceal from me this budding intimacy, or the use he expected to make of it; but he did not tell me what it cost him to make it solid. By this time he was beginning to get money to expend from that dawning speculation, so well known since and so fatal through the abuse that was made of it, which went by the name of "The Mississippi." It was sweet to the Abbé Dubois to discover a secret resource for which he was under no obligation to any one but a man whose interest it was, in self-defence, to buy his protection. Such was the chain which bound the friendship between these two men, and carried them in the end so high, or so far, from each other. The rest of the year 1717 went by in perpetual squabbles between Law and the finances, — that is to say, the Duc de Noailles, — and in appeals which Law was forced to make to the chief councils and to parliament.

The year 1718 opened, on the first day, with the publication of the edict in favour of the Company of the West.

Its capital was fixed at one hundred millions, and it was declared unattachable, except in case of bankruptcy or decease of shareholders. This name was substituted for that of "The Mississippi" (which did not cease to be used), that enterprise which enriched and ruined so many persons, and in which the princes and princesses of the blood, especially Mme. la Duchesse, M. le Duc, and the Prince de Conti, found the mines of Potosi; the continuance of the scheme in their hands being the mainstay of this Company, so fatal to France, whose commerce it destroyed. The protection they gave to it all their lives, and gave publicly, through and against all, equal to the immense profits they derived without sharing any loss, maintained the Company under all risks and perils; and after them came powerful magnates of finance, who have kept the management and the fatness to the present day.

1718.
Edict in favour of the "Company of the West."

The regent, being more and more goaded and provoked by the perpetual shackles laid on Law's operations by the Duc de Noailles and by the dots on the *i*'s added by his friend the chancellor, who increased the oppression on Law by the weight of his office and his own personality, the reputation of which was at that time great, — the regent, I say, irritated by the two opponents who stood in the way, but determined in spite of all obstacles to uphold the views and ways of the Scotchman, determined to make a last effort to unite them with Law, and also to find out for himself what there was of good and true on both sides. In order to do this without interruption, and quietly at leisure, he passed a whole afternoon with them at La Raquette, a pretty little house which the Duc de Noailles had hired, and where he gave them a supper afterwards. This was on the 6th of January.

Defeat of Noailles and the chancellor.

The chancellor and Law went early to La Raquette. The session was long and earnest on both sides, but it proved to be the extreme unction of the two friends. The regent declared that he found bad faith in the Duc de Noailles, and blind obstinacy in the chancellor, the slave of forms, against the all-powerful arguments and evident resources of Law. As I have said before, the Scotchman, without a fluent enunciation, had such clearness in argument and was so seductive in ideas, with a great deal of natural shrewdness under a surface of simplicity, that he often put his hearers off their guard. He asserted that the obstacles which stopped him at every step made him lose all the fruits of his system, and he knew so well how to convince the regent that finally, as we shall presently see, the latter forced all, and abandoned himself wholly to Law.

Project about the "taille" tax.

The disorders in France, inevitable from the system of raising the *taille* tax, disturbed the regent all the more because the fermentation was beginning to be palpable in parliament and in certain of the provinces. They had tried to establish a proportional *taille* in the *généralité* of Paris.[1] Several persons had been working at it for more than a year without other success than the expenditure of eight hundred thousand francs. They bethought themselves next of the royal tithe of Maréchal Vauban, which they employed the Abbé Bignon and little Renault to improve; the latter offering to go at his own expense and make attempts in its favour at several elections, as he did in the end. But all these efforts did harm by the expense they caused, without producing any success. Either the plans were vicious in themselves, or they became so by the manner of carrying them out, possibly by the obstacles put in their way by the interest and jealousy of that cruel financial phalanx that was always supported by the magistracy of finance. However this may be, it is certain that the good intentions of the regent, who in the present case was seeking only the relief of the people, were completely frustrated, and it became necessary to return to the usual method of levying the *taille.*

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[1] The *taille* was a poll-tax levied on all persons who were neither nobles nor ecclesiastics. — LITTRÉ.

Though I had never been willing to meddle in the finances, I was not without personal experience of what I have just said about financiers and the magistracy of finance. I had been struck with what Président Maisons had once explained and shown to me about the *gabelle* [salt-tax]; the enormity of eighty thousand men being employed to collect it, and the horrors that were practised in doing so, to the injury of the people. I was also struck with the difference in provinces equally subject to the king, in some of which the *gabelle* is rigorously enforced, whereas in others the salt is free; yet the king does not derive less from the latter, who enjoy a liberty in this respect that makes one regard the others as being in abject servitude to those scoundrels of *gabeleurs* [salt-tax collectors] who live and enrich themselves on rapine. I conceived, therefore, the idea of doing away with the *gabelle* and making salt free and merchantable; and for this purpose letting the king buy up, at a third more than their value, the few salt marshes that belonged to private individuals, — the king to own them all, and sell the salt to his subjects at the rate put upon it; not obliging any one to buy more than he wanted. In point of fact there were only the marshes of Brouage to buy. The king would profit by release from the costs of this odious tax; the people would profit by their liberty and freedom from endless pillage which they endured under that monstrous horde of employés, who would die with hunger if they depended only on their wages; the State would also profit considerably in the matter of cattle, as any one can see at a glance by comparing the different appearance of those that get salt in the provinces where there is no *gabelle* with those where the dearness and restrictions upon salt prevent the animals from getting any.

I proposed this to the regent, who entered into it with joy. The affair was brought forward and about to pass, when Fagon and other financial magistrates, who did not venture to oppose it in the beginning, were found to have taken their measures so well that the plan was defeated. Some time later I endeavoured to return to it, and had every reason to believe the thing certain and that it would be accomplished within a week. Again the same persons got wind of it and were able to make it miscarry. Besides the advantages that I have just explained, it would have been a most essential benefit to have forced that army of *gabeleurs*, living on the blood of the people, to become soldiers, artisans, or labourers.

All good impossible in France.

This occasion drags from me a truth that I recognized during the time that I was in the Council, and which I would not have believed if sad experience had not taught it to me; and that is, that to do good is impossible. So few persons want it in good faith; so many others have interests contrary to each kind of good that is proposed. Those who desire it are ignorant of that which hedges it round, and without that knowledge they cannot succeed, they cannot ward off the adroitness and the influence opposed to them; and this adroitness, being supported by the power of persons of superior authority and art of management, becomes so complicated and underground that the good which might be done is necessarily defeated. This grievous truth, which will always be true in a government such as ours has been since the days of Cardinal Mazarin, becomes eminently consoling to those who feel and who think, but no longer take part in anything.

Manœuvres against Law by the Duc de Noailles and the chancellor.

The more harassed the regent was, the more he turned to me in regard to the men and matters about which he was now upon his guard. He had spoken to me more than once of the Duc de Noailles and the chancellor before the session at La Raquette, of the jealousy of the former against Law, of the ineptitude of the latter in State affairs, in finance, in the usages of the world. He did not hide from me his disgust at both of them and at their intimate union, which made the chancellor, in all and for all, the voluntary slave of the Duc de Noailles. The language of the latter pleased him; his easy grace of manner and his habits, always in the fashion of the day, whatever it was, put him at his ease with him. Noailles' intellect and his well-established junto made the regent afraid of him. On the other hand, he could not part with Law and his system, because of his natural love of indirect ways, and the attraction of those mines of gold which Law made him foresee all opened and worked by his operations. Hopeless of making Noailles and Law agree together, after all that he had done to bring it about, his uneasiness became extreme when he saw himself at last compelled to choose between the two. He often spoke of this to me; and I heard also from Law of all that went on.

Law's faith in his system.

Whatever Law's system may have been, he himself had the best faith in the world in it. His personal interests never mastered him; he was true and simple; he had integrity; he wished to walk openly and frankly. He was therefore doubly irritated by the obstacles raised against him at every step by the Duc de Noailles, and by the duplicity of the latter's conduct towards him. He was not less irritated by the chancellor's slowness, which, concerted with Noailles, checked and made abortive all Law's operations. He was often forced to go and persuade the principal men in parliament and its president and that of the Cour des Comptes, whom Noailles stirred up against him; and, after he had fully convinced them, Noailles' tricks and the chancellor's delays still continued and made useless operations which had seemed determined upon and without any difficulty. Law told me all his troubles and vexations; often he was very near to throwing up the whole thing; and would go and complain to the regent, whom he kept informed of all these manœuvres. Then the regent would speak of them to me with great bitterness; but he never got more out of me than pity for such annoyances, and assurances that my ignorance of finance prevented me from giving him any advice.

Before the departure of the Abbé Dubois for London, being urged by Law and his own interests, he had worked upon the regent's mind against Noailles and the chancellor. His interest in doing so was double. He was beginning to draw hugely from Law; how much he drew was shrouded in darkness; he thought already of the Cardinal's hat and the need he should have for money in Rome. He had also another purpose, that of governing the regent all alone. To do this, it was necessary to part him, little by little, from those who, in one way or another, had his confidence. A man like the Duc de Noailles was formidable to Dubois, and he seized this occasion to get rid of him, convinced that after the notoriety of being sacrificed to Law Noailles would not recover confidence or be once more a man to fear.

I knew from Law that Dubois' blows had struck home, and for this reason he was grieved at his absence. Law would fain have had me fill his place; but I knew the regent's suspicious feelings too well; he regarded me, and with reason, as the declared enemy of the Duc de Noailles; my remarks against him would therefore have miscarried. Besides, I found myself unable to decide in my own mind which was the better side to take on the finances; and I was not willing, whatever hatred I felt to Noailles, to take upon myself to throw the State and the regent into the arms of Law and his novel system. I therefore let things go their way,—careful, however, to be well-informed, and to hold myself neutral in regard to the regent; not to chill him from speaking to me in confidence, but, above all, not to put myself forward or commit myself in any way. This conduct on my part lasted until the meeting at La Raquette, after which I saw that the regent had decided on his course, which was only retarded by the feebleness which always checked him at the moment of execution.

My conduct in this matter.

After a while the Duc d'Orléans expressed himself openly to me, and discussed the question as to whom he should intrust with the finances and the Seals. His object was to give the finances to some one in whom Law should find no further obstacle to his operations. Law and I had often talked this matter over. He had frequently had recourse to d'Argenson, who entered into all his ideas, and it was d'Argenson whom he wanted in the finances, because he counted on being fully at liberty under him.

D'Argenson chosen for the finances and the Seals.

D'Argenson was a man of much mind, and a supple mind, which, for his fortune's sake, accommodated itself to everything. His birth was better than that of most men of his calling. He had long managed the police, and with it a species of inquisition, with transcendent judgment. He was wholly without fear of parliament, which he often attacked; he was very obliging to people of quality, — hiding from the king and Pontchartrain the adventures of their children and relations, which were really only youthful peccadilloes, but would have ruined them irretrievably had he not drawn a curtain before them. With a terrifying face, which recalled that of the three judges of hell, he made merry at all things with excellent wit, and had brought such order into that innumerable multitude of Paris that there was no inhabitant whose daily conduct and habits he did not know, with rare discernment as to when to bear down, and when to lighten his hand in each affair that came before him, — leaning always towards lenity, but with the art of making even innocent persons tremble before him; courageous, bold, audacious in riots, and in that way, master of the populace. His morals were very much the same as those that were constantly brought before him; and I don't know whether he recognized any other divinity than that of fortune. In the midst of painful functions, all apparently rigorous, human nature found mercy before him readily; and when he was at liberty with his friends of low estate (in whom he trusted more than he did in persons of higher rank), he abandoned himself to gayety and was charming as a companion. He had some knowledge of letters, but little or no acquirement in other studies; his natural intelligence supplied the want, also his great knowledge of the world, a very rare thing in a man of his station.

I prepare d'Argenson; why.

I begged the regent to let me inform and prepare d'Argenson; not that I doubted his acceptance of such distinction, but I wanted to profit by the moment to conciliate the future Keeper of the Seals for the Cardinal de Noailles, so that the prelate should lose as little as possible in losing d'Aguesseau. The regent approved; and I sent a note to d'Argenson Thursday morning to come to me that evening between seven and eight for urgent and important business. D'Argenson came at the appointed time. I did not keep him in suspense. Before me I then beheld a man terrified at the burden of the finances, but much flattered by the sauce of the Seals, and sufficiently himself, even in this moment of great surprise, to make many difficulties as to the finances, though careful at the same time not to risk the loss of the Seals. I explained to him at full length the wishes of the regent in relation to Law, and not less clearly with regard to parliament and all that the regent desired to find in him in that respect. Law and the finances, I told him, were conditions *sine qua non*, which he must accept. As for parliament he thought as I did, and as the regent did; in that respect, therefore, he was the man for the place. His ideas, the movement of the cabal, his personal interests, all led him to accept it. It can be imagined what he said to me on the honour of receiving the Seals, which he felt, and with reason, that he owed to me, and about which I was modest, though at the same time allowing him to feel the part I had taken in the matter.

The chancellor loses the Seals and is exiled.

On the 28th of January La Vrillière [secretary to the Council of Regency], who had been summoned to the Palais-Royal late the night before, went at eight o'clock in the morning to demand the rendition of the Seals by the chancellor, and to tell him from the regent to retire, until further orders, to his country-house at Fresnes, on the road from Paris to Meaux. The chancellor asked firmly but modestly if he could see the regent; being refused, whether he could write to him. La Vrillière said he would take the letter. The chancellor wrote it, read it to La Vrillière, sealed it and gave it to him. He then wrote a note to the Duc de Noailles, and went to inform his wife, who was just confined, of his fall, and the next day he went to Fresnes.

Noailles, warned of the bomb by the chancellor's note, did not doubt what would happen to him as to the finances. He determined to be beforehand with the regent and to put himself in a position to get some good out of it. He went to the regent at once, and had the duplicity to ask him why the Seals were lying on his table. The regent had the kindness to tell him why. Noailles, with the easiest manner he could manage to assume, asked to whom he meant to give them. The regent told him that. Whereupon Noailles remarked that he saw the cabal had got the upper hand and he could not do better than yield to it and resign his commission on the finances. The regent instantly said, "Do you ask for nothing in place of it?" "Nothing," replied Noailles. "I give you," added the regent, "a place in the Council of Regency." "I shall make little use of it," replied Noailles arrogantly, presuming on the regent's weakness. He lied shamefully, for he came to the next Council and never missed one afterwards.

Thus the chancellor was the victim of the Duc de Noailles, and the scapegoat that expiated the sins of his friend. Noailles had used him as a shield, making him see and do whatever suited him, without concealment. He abused the friendship, gratitude, and confidence of a man of worth and honour, who, in his total ignorance of finances and of the world, and in the dimness of his new and unaccustomed life, had trusted him as his only sure guide. He was exiled and lost the Seals solely because he was Noailles' slave.

Trifles between the Duc d'Orléans and me.

I will not omit relating a mere trifle, because it helps to show more plainly the character of the Duc d'Orléans. One day when the Duchesse d'Orléans had gone to Montmartre, and I was walking alone with the regent in the little garden of the Palais-Royal talking over affairs, he suddenly interrupted himself and turning to me said: "I am going to tell you something which will give you pleasure." Whereupon he told me how tired he was of the life he led; that neither his age nor his desires required it any longer, — with other remarks of the same nature. He said he had resolved to give up his suppers, and spend his evenings soberly and decently either in his own apartments or with the Duchesse d'Orléans; that his health would gain by it, and also he should get more time for business; but he added that he could not make the change until after the departure of M. and Mme. de Lorraine, for he should die of ennui if he supped every evening at the Duchesse d'Orléans' with them and a troop of women. But as soon as they were gone, I might rely upon it, there would be no more suppers of *roués* and wantons (those were his words); that he meant to lead a reasonable and decent life, and one more suitable to his present age.

I own I felt enchanted, because of the deep interest that I took in him. I showed my feelings to him with heartfelt warmth, thanking him for this confidence. I said he knew well how long it was since I had spoken to him of the indecency of his life and the time he wasted, because I saw that I was wasting mine, and had given up all hope of changing him; he could therefore well believe the surprise and joy he gave me. He assured me his resolution was taken; and thereupon I took leave of him, as the hour for his supper had come.

The next day I heard, from persons to whom the *roués* related it, that the Duc d'Orléans was no sooner at table than he began to laugh and to tell them how he had played a fine trick upon me, into which I had tumbled headlong. He related our conversation, and the laughter and applause were great. That was the only time he amused himself at my expense — I should rather say at his own; and I certainly had the folly to gobble it down in a sudden joy that deprived me of reflection, and did me honour and him none. I would not give him the pleasure of telling him I knew of his joke, nor did I ever remind him of what he had said to me; and he himself dared not speak of it.

I never could discover what fancy took him to tell me that tale, — me, who for years had never opened my lips to him on the life he led, nor he to me. Sometimes, when alone with his confidential valets, never before others, a complaint would escape him, though rarely, that I ill-used him, and treated him roughly; but only in two words, and nothing bitter or as if he were angry with me. Besides, he told the truth; occasionally, when I was pushed to extremes by his unreasonableness or his vital blunders in important matters relating to himself or to the State, especially when he had agreed and firmly resolved from sound reasoning to do or not to do a thing, and his fatal pliancy turned him in my very hand and made him do the contrary, I own I was cruelly exercised by him. But the trick he liked to play me when we were *tête-à-tête*, never before others, and one of which my vivacity was always the dupe, was to suddenly interrupt some important chain of reasoning by a buffoonery. I could not bear it; and I was sometimes so angry that I attempted to go away. I would tell him that if he wanted to joke I would joke as much as he liked, but to mix buffoonery with serious matters was intolerable. Then he would laugh with all his heart, and all the more because, the thing not being rare, I ought to have been upon my guard, and never was, and therefore I was vexed both at the thing itself and at being fooled by it. After this, he would resume the subject of which we were treating. Princes must have some ways of relaxing themselves, and jesting occasionally with those they regard as friends is one of them.

Chance showed me one day what he really thought of me. I shall tell it here and then be done with these trifles. The Duc d'Orléans, returning one afternoon from the Council of Regency to the Tuileries, with the Duc de Chartres and the Bailli de Conflans alone in the carriage with him, began to talk of me, and made such a eulogy upon me that I dare not repeat it. I don't know what had happened at the Council to give rise to this. I shall only say that he dwelt upon his happiness in having a friend so faithful, so constant at all times, so useful as I was and had been to him, so sure, true, disinterested, firm; such as he had never found the like of; on whom he could count on all occasions; one who had rendered him the greatest services, and who told him the truth, straightforward and frank in all things and without self-interest. This praise lasted till they reached the Palais-Royal, the regent telling his son that he wanted to teach him to know me, and to remember the happiness and support — *bonheur et appui*, those were his words — that he had always found in my friendship and my advice. The Bailli de Conflans, surprised himself at this outpouring, told me of it the next day under secrecy, and I own I could never forget it. It is also true that, no matter what was done against me, or I myself did in vexation and disgust at what went on, he always came back to me (nearly always being the first to make the advance) with shame, friendship, confidence; and he never found himself in any trouble that he did not seek me, open his heart to me, and consult me in all things — without, however, always believing what I told him, being led away by others.

Fagon, after losing his office of chief-physician, (the only one that is lost on the death of a king) retired to the Fau-

Death of Fagon, the late king's physician.

bourg Saint-Victoire in Paris, where he had a fine apartment in the Jardin du Roi, a garden where simples were grown and rare and medicinal plants, the management of which was left to him. He lived there, always very solitary, in constant enjoyment of science and belles-lettres and the things of his calling, which he greatly loved. I have said so much about him heretofore that there is nothing left to add, except that he died in much piety, at a great age for so deformed and cacochymical a machinery as his, which his knowledge and his incredible sobriety had preserved so long, always working and studying. It was surprising that after the close intimacy and perfect confidence always existing between himself and Mme. de Maintenon, who had made him the king's physician and maintained him in favour, they never saw each other again after the death of the king.

The Abbé de Saint-Pierre publishes a book.

A very stupid thing made a monstrous noise about this time. The Abbé de Saint-Pierre was a man of intelligence, letters, and chimeras. He had long been a member of the Académie Française and was always rather full of himself; a good man and an honest man withal, great maker of books, projects, and reformations in politics and government in favour of the public good. He thought himself at liberty by the change of government to give wings to his imagination, — always in behalf of the public good. He therefore wrote a book which he entitled "La Polysinodie," in which he painted to the life the despotic and often tyrannical power that the secretaries of State and the controller-general had exercised under the late reign; he called them vizirs, and their departments vizirates, and expatiated thereon with more truth than prudence.

As soon as the book appeared it caused a general uprising of all the former government and those who were hoping to get back to it after the regency. The former courtiers of the late king vied with one another in a grateful loyalty that cost them nothing. The Maréchal de Villeroy signalized himself by a fearful uproar, and stirred up, willing or not willing, the whole of the former Court. Outside of these persons nobody was scandalized by a work which might lack prudence, but was certainly not wanting in respect to the king; and which exposed only truths which all then living had witnessed and the evidence of which no one could deny. The academies and men of letters, and the rest of the world were indignant and showed it, that these gentlemen of the old Court could not bear truth and freedom, so accustomed were they to servitude. But Maréchal de Villeroy made such declamation and clamour and hubbub that, dragged on by his violence, people were afraid not to shout in echo; so that finally the regent, who had long disliked all the Saint-Pierres, and whom Villeroy had rather awed from his youth up, did not resist the tumult. The Abbé de Saint-Pierre was dismissed from the Academy against the will of the Academy, which, however, did not venture to resist to the end. The book was suppressed, but the Academy, profiting by the taste of the regent for *mezzo-termine*, obtained that there should be no election, and that the seat of the Abbé de Saint-Pierre should not be filled; which was adhered to in spite of the cries of his persecutors until his death.

Burning of a bridge in Paris.

The Petit-Pont took fire April 17. An imprudent fellow, looking for something with a candle in a hay-boat, started it. Afraid lest the fire should be communicated to other boats in the midst of which he was, he shoved out hastily into the current and was carried against a pillar of the arches of the Petit-Pont. The flames rose and caught the houses of the bridge, making a great conflagration. The Duc de Tresmes, governor of Paris, the magistrates of police, and many persons flocked there. Cardinal de Noailles passed the night in having the patients of the Hôtel-Dieu carried to his house, and in succouring them when there, like a true pastor and father; his house was full and his rooms not spared. There was a moment when it was supposed the whole Hôtel-Dieu would burn down. But only a part was destroyed, with some thirty other houses either burned or pulled down. The Capuchins distinguished themselves very usefully, and so did the Franciscans. The Duc de Guiche sent for a regiment of guards, which did great service, and the Duc de Chaulnes with his light-horse cavalry guarded the furniture and other property in the street. People laughed a good deal at Maréchal de Villars, who brought up cannon to batter down houses; as they were all of wood and huddled together, the remedy would have been worse than the disease. The master of firemen gained no honour on this occasion.

Death of the Queen of England.

The Queen of England died at Saint-Germain May 7, after an illness of ten or twelve days. Her life since she came to France at the close of 1688, had been one long series of misfortunes, heroically borne to the end as an oblation to God, in detachment, penitence, prayer, and continual good works, with all the virtues that perfect a saint. With much natural sensitiveness, much intelligence, and innate haughtiness, which she had learned to bring under and humiliate, with the grandest air in the world, the most majestic, the most imposing, she was, withal, gentle and modest. Her death was as saintly as her life. She saved enough from the six hundred thousand francs a year which the king allowed her, to support poor English people, of whom Saint-Germain was full. Her body was taken to the Filles de Sainte-Marie at Chaillot, where she frequently retreated in her lifetime. The Court took no part in her obsequies. The Duc de Noailles went to Saint-Germain merely to see that all was conducted decently.

The regent granted the Duchess of Portsmouth eight thousand francs' increase of the pension of twelve thousand francs she already enjoyed. She was very old, quite converted, and penitent, much involved in her affairs, and reduced to live in the country. It was just, and a proper example, to remember the important and continual services she had rendered with such good grace to France in the days when she lived in England, the all-powerful mistress of Charles II.

Audacious action of parliament.

Parliament assembled on the 11th and 12th of August, and vomited all its venom in the celebrated decree, of which the following was the main clause: "This court ordains that ordinances and edicts bearing creation of offices of finance and letters-patent concerning the Bank registered in this court, shall be executed. That being so, that the Bank shall be reduced to the limits and to the operations established by the letters of May 2d and 20th, 1716; and, in consequence, it is forbidden to keep or retain, directly or indirectly, any of the royal funds in the coffers of the Bank, or to make any usage or employment of them for the account of the Bank or the profit of those who keep it, under the pains and penalties named in the ordinances: it also ordains that the said royal funds shall be remitted and conveyed directly to all the responsible officials, to be by them employed in the business of their offices, and that all such officers and others handling funds shall be sureties and responsible, in their proper and private names, each for himself, for all the said royal funds which shall be remitted and conveyed to them through the medium of the Bank: it is likewise forbidden to all foreigners, even naturalized, to meddle directly or indirectly, or to participate under assumed names, in the handling or the administration of the royal funds, under the pains and penalties enjoined by the ordinances and declarations registered in this court."

It can well be imagined what a noise this decree produced. It was nothing less than seizing by sole authority of parliament the whole administration of the finances, putting them under the axe of that assembly, rendering accountable to its will all those employed by the regent and the regent himself, interdicting Law personally, and putting him at the mercy of parliament, which would certainly have been more than unfavourable to him. After this trial of strength, there was but one step for the parliament to make, to become in fact, as it assumed to be in this crazy pretension, guardian of the king and master of the kingdom, with the regent still more under its tutelage than, and perhaps as much exposed as, King Charles I. of England.

Extraordinary commission given to the king's law officers.

Parliament assembled again on the 20th of August and ordered the law officers of the king to ascertain "what had become of the notes of State which had passed through the chamber of justice; those which had been given for lotteries held once a month; those that were given for the Mississippi or Company of the West; those which had been to the mint for change into specie." The king's lawyers went at once to the regent to tell him of the duty laid upon them. He answered coldly that it was for them to execute their commission. They asked him to give them some instructions about it. The regent, for all answer, turned his back upon them and went to his own room, which bewildered them a good deal. I must now relate how the regent put back the curb on these horses that had taken the bit in their teeth and were preparing so boldly to excite great tumults.

Immediately after this commission was given by parliament to the king's law officers the rumour began to get about of an approaching *lit de justice.* It was not that the regent had as yet thought of it; the idea was founded solely on the monstrous attacks of parliament against the royal authority, on the necessity that some persons saw of using the only means of repressing them, and on the fears of others. But the grand support of the audacity of parliament had been the just and general belief in the regent's weakness founded on his whole conduct, and this gave factious persons confidence that a *lit de justice* was an action to which the regent would never dare commit himself, at the point to which he had now allowed cabals and interferences to attain. The reading of the Memoirs of Cardinal de Retz, Joly, and Mme. de Motteville had turned all heads. Those books were so the rage that there was neither man nor woman of any condition who did not have them continually in their hands. Ambition, the desire for novelty, the adroitness of those who gave them this vogue, made many of their readers hope for the pleasure and honour of figuring and reaching the summit, like the personages of the former minority. Some persons fancied they had found another Cardinal Mazarin in Law, a foreigner like himself, and another Fronde in the party of the Duc and Duchesse du Maine. The feebleness of the Duc d'Orléans was compared to that of the queen-mother, with the disadvantage to boot between the position of a mother and that of being nephew to the king's grandfather.

The regent is drawn from his lethargy.

To tell the truth, all was tending to some extreme, and it was high time that the regent should wake up from a supineness which made him despised, and emboldened his enemies and those of the State to dare all, and undertake all. This lethargy of his held down his true servitors in a state of depression at the utter impossibility of doing any good. It had led him at last to the verge of a precipice, and the kingdom he governed to the eve of a great confusion.

The return of the Abbé Dubois from England, his fortunes threatened by the diminution of his master's power, the alarm that Law had good reason to feel lest parliament should take him by the collar and that others would then abandon him, the fear of the Keeper of the Seals (so hated by parliament whilst ruling the police) lest he should lose his present office, made, all together, a combination, into which Law managed to bring M. le Duc, so largely interested in his system, under the inducement of seizing this occasion to overthrow the Duc du Maine, his bastard uncle, gratify his hatred to him, and step into his place beside the king. This conjunction of separate interests, all tending to one purpose, formed an influence which acted on the regent, made him see, all of a sudden, his danger and his only remedy, and convinced him, moreover, that he had not a single moment to lose. Dubois and Law roused him against those whom, hitherto, he had only too well liked and whose dangerous advice he had followed; and this was done so rapidly that no one had any suspicion of it. I must now explain the case.

The regent forces me to speak to him about the parliament.

Under these circumstances, of which I was ignorant, working one afternoon as usual with the Duc d'Orléans I was surprised by his suddenly interrupting what we were doing by speaking bitterly of the actions of parliament. I answered with my usual coldness and indifference on that matter, and continued what we were about. He stopped me, and said he saw plainly I did not choose to answer him about the parliament. I owned that was true, and that he must have observed it for some time. Pressed further, and then very urgently, I answered coldly that he surely remembered all I had said and advised before and after his regency as to parliament; that I was not willing to open the matter again, though I saw advancing with great strides the fulfilment of the prophecy I had made to him; for, master as he had long been to repress and control parliament by a single frown, his sluggish compliance had let that body do so much and undertake so much that it had brought him by degrees to his present strait and to the borders of an abyss. A speech so strong and rare on this subject from my lips, and dragged from me by him, made him feel how little I thought him capable of good and of sustaining it to the end, and also how little trouble I would take to induce him to do so. He was inwardly nettled, and as this came to clinch the impression Dubois, Law, and d'Argenson had made upon him (of which I was wholly ignorant) it had a wonderful effect.

Measures of Parliament to capture and hang Law.

The decree of parliament which I have transcribed had not been published; it transpired and was followed by that commission to the king's law officers, which was the stroke that precipitated things and brought the regent to a determination. It became known that parliament, in defiance of the *procureur-général*, had appointed commissioners of its own to obtain information; that it was judicially acting very secretly; had taken the testimony of many witnesses; and was surreptitiously putting matters in a condition to send bailiffs some morning with a warrant to arrest Law and hang him within three hours in the prison-yard. On this intelligence, which followed closely on the publication of the above-named decree, the Duc de La Force and Fagon, counsellor of State, went to see the regent, and urged him so much that he ordered them to go to my house in the course of the day with Law, and consult as to what should be done. They came, and this was my first intimation that the Duc d'Orléans was beginning to really feel his danger and would consent to take some step. At this conference I saw the hitherto great firmness of Law shaken even to tears. Our discussions did not satisfy us at first, because it was a question of force, and we could not count on that of the regent. The safe-conduct with which Law was furnished would not have arrested parliament for a moment; to break its decrees was hopeless; to talk of appeals was a weakness that parliament would only despise, and regard as an encouragement to go on. Difficulty, therefore, on all sides. Law, more dead than alive, knew not what to say, still less what to do. His safety seemed to us the most pressing thing to secure. Had he been arrested his affair would have been over before any action could have taken place, even if the regent could have resolved to enter the prison with a regiment of guards,—a critical means in such a case, always a sorry one even if successful, and shocking if, instead of Law, they had found a hempen cord and a corpse. I therefore advised Law to go at once to the room of his friend Nancré at the Palais-Royal, Nancrè being then in Spain. He could have been in safety by lodging at the Bank, but I thought a refuge in the Palais-Royal would make more noise and bind the regent more, and would also be a means by which Law could talk with him at all hours and urge him up to the mark. The Duc de La Force and Fagon approved and Law went to the Palais-Royal on leaving my house.

I propose a "lit de justice" at the Tuileries.

This settled, I proposed a *lit de justice*, which was eagerly seized upon by the other three as the only means which remained to break the decrees of parliament. But while the discussion was going on a thought occurred to me; I told the others that the Duc du Maine, the real motive power of all the enterprises of parliament, and the Maréchal de Villeroy, as much allied with it as he, though he concealed it more carefully, would never allow, if they could help it, a *lit de justice* so contrary to their views, their proceedings, their projects; that in order to defeat it they would allege the heat (which was great), the fear of a crowd, of fatigue, of bad air; they would take a pathetic tone about the king's health, well calculated to embarrass the regent; and if he persisted, they would protest against what might happen to the king and possibly refuse to accompany him, and the king, frightened by them, might refuse to go without them; in which case the whole thing would fall through and the impotence of the regent be made manifest. These reflections stopped us short. But a remedy occurred to my mind which I instantly proposed, namely, to hold the *lit de justice* in the Tuileries, a precedent for which existed in the time of the late king. By this expedient there was no necessity to give out notices till the morning of the day, and in this way all concerned would be taken off their guard; no pretext could arise about the king, and at the same time full liberty was given to every one. On this we settled. Law departed; and I dictated a memorandum to Fagon of all that I thought necessary in order to carry out this project secretly, insure its execution, and prevent all obstacles. It was nine o'clock at night when we finished it.

The regent sends for me.

The next day, Saturday, August 20, towards the end of the morning, the Duc d'Orléans sent me word to be with him at four o'clock the same afternoon. I reached the Palais-Royal at that hour, and a moment after La Vrillière came in and solaced me for the company of Grancey and Broglio, two of the *roués*, whom I found sitting familiarly in the grand cabinet, without their wigs. I was soon told to enter the new gallery, painted by Coypel, where I found a quantity of maps and plans of the Pyrenees, which Asfeld was showing the regent and Maréchal de Villeroy. The Duc d'Orléans received me heartily and as if he had need of me. A moment later he said in a low voice that he had much to say to me before we "assembled," but he must first get the maréchal away. This was the first I had heard of any assembly, and I did not know of whom it might be composed. At last the maréchal, after his usual chatter, went away; the Duc d'Orléans drew a long breath and led me into the cabinet behind the great salon on the rue de Richelieu.

He proposes to attack parliament and the Duc du Maine.

On entering, he took me by the arm and said that he was at the crisis of his regency, and everything was at stake for him on this occasion. I replied that I saw that only too well; but that all depended upon himself at this critical moment. He then said that he was resolved to strike a great blow at the parliament; that he approved of the *lit de justice* at the Tuileries for the reasons that had made me propose it; that he was sure of M. le Duc by means of his new pension of one hundred and fifty thousand francs as head of the Council of Regency; that he had, that morning, obtained the pledged support of the Prince de Conti; and that M. le Duc wanted the education of the king taken from the Duc du Maine, a thing that was equally to his, the regent's, interest, because the king was increasing in years and knowledge, and it was important to take him out of the hands of his enemy. He added that he was inclined to hold the *lit de justice*, if he could, on the following Tuesday, and to take the education from the Duc du Maine.

I interrupted him there, saying that that was not at all my advice. "Eh! and why is it not your advice?" he demanded. "Because," I replied, "it is undertaking too much at a time. What is now your most urgent matter which admits of no delay? The parliament, of course. That is the grand point; be satisfied with that. Strike the great blow there; know how to maintain it afterwards; and you will regain in a moment all your authority; after which you will have time enough to think of the Duc du Maine. Don't confound him with the parliament; don't identify him with it; if you do you will join their interests by a mutual disaster. See first what the public will think, and do, about the blow that you level against parliament. You did not strike down M. du Maine when you could have done it, and should have done it, when the public and the parliament expected it and desired it; you have let them be manipulated by the Duc du Maine, and now you want to degrade him at the wrong moment. Besides, will M. le Duc be content with taking the education from M. du Maine? Does he not want it for himself?" "He does not care about it," replied the regent. "That is well," I replied, "but try to make him hear reason about your wisest course now. Remember, monsieur," I added, "that when I oppose the overthrow of M. du Maine I go against my dearest interests; from the education to the rank is only a step; you know the ardour of my desires on that point, and you know, moreover, that I hate M. du Maine, who has done us such wrongs; but the good of the State and yours is dearer to me than my rank or my vengeance, and I conjure you to reflect upon this."

I oppose his attacking the Duc du Maine; why.

The regent was surprised, perhaps as much at my control over myself as at my reasons. He embraced me, yielded instantly, and said I spoke to him as a friend, and not as a duke and peer. I took occasion to make him a few light reproaches for his suspicions on that head. We agreed.

therefore, that the Duc du Maine should be left for another and less complicated time. The regent then returned to the question of parliament, and spoke of dismissing its president, Mesmes. I opposed this also, and told him the man was too bound up with the Duc du Maine to strike at the one and leave the other. That in this, too, I spoke as a friend, because my keenest pleasure would be to ruin that scoundrel, the author and instrument of all the horrors that had happened to the peers. After a full discussion of all points we came to that of the actual machinery in detail of a *lit de justice.* I explained to him what I supposed it ought to be, and I undertook at his request to manage it, with Fontanieu, master of crown properties, without the knowledge of any one.

Plans laid at a conference.

All this being arranged, the regent entered the salon into which the cabinet opened, from the door of which he called in the Keeper of the Seals, La Vrillière, and the Abbé Dubois, who were waiting in the salon beyond it, in which there was no one else. This was where the regent worked in summer. He took his usual seat, I next him, the Keeper of the Seals and La Vrillière opposite. After a short conversation on the subject, the Keeper of the Seals read the draft of an edict of the Council of Regency and of letters-patent breaking the decrees of the parliament; these documents were those that were afterwards printed. Just as the reading ended, M. le Duc was announced. The Duc d'Orléans put on his wig and went to meet him in the next room, but soon returned with M. le Duc behind him. As I knew the meaning of their friendliness I asked the regent, laughing, why he had brought in M. le Duc to disturb our meeting. "You see him now," he replied, taking M. le Duc by the arm, "and you will see him here again." The other three men, who stood at some distance, seemed much surprised at this entrance; they approached us, however, and we sat down, M. le Duc between the regent and me. His Royal Highness then requested the Keeper of the Seals to read the documents over again, which he did without any interruption. M. le Duc approved them strongly, speaking to me in a low voice now and then. When the reading was over the regent rose and took M. le Duc to the end of the salon, where he called me up to him a few moments later, and said that the most pressing thing of all now was the *lit de justice* and the arrangements for it, and he begged me to see Fontanieu at once about them.

As I was getting into my carriage one of Law's lacqueys, who was on the watch, begged me earnestly to enter his master's room, which was near by. I found him alone with his wife. I told him that all went well; and that M. le Duc had been and was still with the regent; for I knew that Law was the instrument of their union. I added that I was in a hurry, and he would hear more from his Royal Highness as soon as possible. He seemed to breathe again; and I went off at once to Fontanieu in the Place Vendôme.

VI.

I settle with Fontanieu the secret arrangements of the "lit de justice."

WHEN Fontanieu and I were alone in his cabinet, I talked on other matters to give the valets who had opened the doors time to retire, and then, to his great astonishment, I went outside to see if they were gone, and closed the doors myself. I then told Fontanieu that the matter was a very secret one, which the regent had charged me to communicate to him myself; but before explaining it, I must know if his Royal Highness could count absolutely upon him. Fontanieu trembled through his whole body, and turned whiter than his linen; he stammered a few words, and said his Royal Highness could count on him so far as his conscience permitted. I smiled and looked at him fixedly, and that smile seemed to show him that he owed me excuses not to feel secure when the matter came through my hands, for he made them at once. I then told him that the matter in question was a *lit de justice*, for the detailed arrangements for which we had need of him. I had scarcely explained the matter before the poor man drew a loud breath, as if I had lifted a stone from his stomach, and asked me many times if that was all we wanted of him. He promised everything in his joy at being let off so cheaply, and truly kept his word, both as to the work and as to the secrecy. He had never seen a *lit de justice*, and had not the slightest notion of one. I sat down at his desk and drew out the plan; I discussed it with him a full hour, and when I thought I had sufficiently explained it, I returned to the Palais-Royal, on pretence of having forgotten something, to deceive my servants.

Ibagnet, the concierge of the Palais-Royal, was waiting for me at the door of the Duc d'Orléans' apartments, with an order to beg me to write to him. It was the sacred hour of the *roués* and the supper, against which no business could prevail. I sat down in the regent's winter cabinet and wrote him an account of what I had done, not without indignation that he could not defer his pleasures for an affair of this importance.

M. le Duc writes to me to ask an interview.

The next morning, Sunday, 21st, on leaving my bed at half-past seven, a *valet de chambre* of M. le Duc was announced to me, with a letter he was to give into my own hands. The man had come much earlier. and had gone to hear mass at the Jacobins, while waiting until I woke up. M. le Duc's letter was as follows: —

"I think, monsieur, that it is absolutely necessary I should have a conversation with you on the affair you know of; I think also the sooner the better. Therefore, I should wish, if it could be, that it were to-morrow, Sunday, in the morning. See at what hour you could come to me or that I should go to you; choose which you think will excite least notice, because it is useless to give the public cause to think. I shall await your reply to-morrow morning; and beg you, meantime, to count on my friendship, and continue to me yours. H. DE BOURBON."

Long interview between M. le Duc and me.

I went at once to the hôtel de Condé, where I found M. le Duc in the act of dressing himself and quite alone, as his valet told me he would be at that hour. He finished dressing, and begged me to pass into his cabinet, where he shut the door, offered me an armchair, took one himself, and we sat down facing each other. He began by excuses for taking such a liberty with me, and, after a few compliments, entered upon his subject. He said he thought it best to lose no time in speaking to me on the matter broached the night before; and first, he should ask in confidence whether I did not think, as he did, that it was doing nothing to strike at parliament, if at the same time the blow did not fall on its principal motor power; and whether the Duc d'Orléans did not think so too. Without allowing him to think me stupid, I was not sorry to force him to be the first to name the Duc du Maine, which he did in a few moments, on which I asked him in what way he proposed to strike at the Duc du Maine. "By taking from him the education," he replied. I said that the education could be taken from him independently of a *lit de justice*, and the two things done at different times. He replied that the regent was convinced that, this appointment having been conferred or confirmed at a *lit de justice*, it could not be taken from the Duc du Maine in any other way. I contested this a little, but he cut me short by repeating that such was the opinion of the regent, that he had told him so, on which it had become a question between them of using the natural occasion of the *lit de justice* now about to be held, and it was on that they wished to know what I thought.

I tried to ramble round the field, but was incontinently recalled by M. le Duc, and forced to enter the lists seriously. I confess that the more I had thought the matter over, the less wise I thought it would be to attack the Duc du Maine. I was on my guard against my inclination to do so, and perhaps the sternness with which I held myself in increased my sense of its injudiciousness. I had a horror of bringing dangerous results to the State by a thing, however just in itself, in which my private interests were mingled; and the more those interests were dear to me, the more I turned myself forcibly away, that I might do nothing unworthy of an honourable man. I therefore stopped all verbiage, urged as I was, and answered plainly that the two points he proposed to discuss were radically different; that no impartial mind could deny that it was expedient for the State, the king, and the regent to take the education from M. du Maine; but I also thought that no one could be found who did not consider that step extremely dangerous. After which I detailed to him at full length the reasons I had already given to the Duc d'Orléans.

M. le Duc listened to me very attentively, and answered that for his part he considered that to attack the Duc du Maine was the only remedy against civil war. I asked him to explain to me that proposition, so much the reverse of mine, but to tell me first, frankly, what he should think of civil war in the present state of the kingdom. He said it would be ruin. Then returning to his idea, he repeated, what I had owned, that it would be wise to take the king from the hands of the Duc du Maine; that settled, we should see if there were any certain hope of doing it at a later time, and with less danger; that the longer the Duc du Maine was left with the king, the more the king would get accustomed to him, and that the king himself might prove an obstacle that did not yet exist; also that M. du Maine had gained ground during the regency through the mere fact of his having the education, which made him regard himself as the future master of the State at the king's majority.

I oppose the deposition of the Duc du Maine.

All this was said more diffusely than I report. M. le Duc then begged me to answer him straightforwardly. I could not deny the truths that he advanced. "But, monsieur," I said, "will that prevent a civil war? It proves the enormity of the blunder of having left the bastards in their position at the death of the king and after it. Every one expected their fall then and desired it; but at present, when the face of things has changed by habit, and still more by the judgment rendered between the princes of the blood and the bastards, that which it was wise to do on the death of the king will, if done now, precipitate us into trouble." [After a long statement of the grounds of this opinion] M. le Duc, who had listened to me with extreme attention, seemed really struck and remained silent for a few moments; then in a gentle but firm tone, such as I always dread in public matters, because it indicates that a course is determined on, he said: "Monsieur, I can very well conceive all the difficulties that you make; I agree that they are great; but there are two others which appear to me incomparably greater on the other side: one is that the Duc d'Orléans and I are lost at the king's majority, if the education is left to M. du Maine till then; the other is that it will assuredly be left to him if on this present occasion it is not taken from him. Look at it how you please, that is the fact; as to trusting to anything the Duc d'Orléans may promise me for the future, that is a snare into which I shall not fall, and to let myself be fooled now only to be lost four years hence is what I will never do." [A long argument followed and then] M. le Duc declared that his only demand was that M. du Maine should be removed from the king; and he begged me to see the Duc d'Orléans that very morning and say that he would consent to either one of three edicts, the drafts of which he had carried to the regent, which the latter preferred. After which M. le Duc declared to me plainly that his attachment to the Duc d'Orléans depended wholly on the removal of the Duc du Maine; without which he would not take one step either for or against him.

M. le Duc declares that his attachment to the regent depends on the removal of M. du Maine.

I returned home, and went to mass at the Jacobins, a church which I could enter from my garden. It was not without wandering of mind. But God gave me grace to pray with a good and honest heart, asking that I might conduct myself for His glory and the good of the State without personal self-seeking. I may even say that I received the grace of interesting right-minded people in this affair without their forming any idea of what it was, so that I obtained rectitude and light and strength from them against my own inclinations; and, to say it once for all, my prayer was granted, and I had nothing to reproach myself with in the whole after-course of this affair, in which I followed solely my ideas of what was best for the State, without turning aside either to the right hand or to the left.

Fontanieu was awaiting me on my return from mass. I had to stand his questions about the details of his machinery and behave as if I had nothing else upon my mind. I arranged my chamber for a *lit de justice* and made him see and understand various local points of the ceremonial which he had not understood, but which it was very important not to omit. I had requested him to see the regent that morning; but as it was necessary to enlighten the latter beforehand, I told Fontanieu to receive his orders in the afternoon.

I render an account to the regent of my interview with M. le Duc.

It was half-past eleven when I reached the Palais-Royal, and, as *contretemps* always happen in all great affairs, I found the regent closeted with Maréchal d'Huxelles and the Cardinals de Rohan and de Bissy, who were each reading him a long rigmarole of their writing, or said to be so, under the specious title of bringing Cardinal de Noailles to their way of thinking. I was on thorns; and presently I took the liberty of drawing the regent to a window, where

I told him that while he was amusing himself with those two cardinals, who were making him lose his precious time about a reconciliation they did not wish to make, I had to give him a long account of a very important conversation I had had with M. le Duc before he could see the latter again. On this he returned to the others, told them he was tired and that their affair could be better understood if heard twice, and in less than a quarter of an hour they departed with their portfolios under their arms. I took their place, and closing the doors, we walked up and down the long gallery, the Duc d'Orléans and I, till three o'clock, that is to say, more than two good hours.

Long as my conversation with M. le Duc had been, I repeated it in full to the Duc d'Orléans, adding my reflections as I went along. He was surprised at the strength of my reasons not to fall upon M. du Maine, and much alarmed at the tenacity of M. le Duc on that point. He said it was true that he had asked him for the three proposals of different edicts and that M. le Duc had given them to him, saying he did not care which was taken, provided it ensured the dismissal of the Duc du Maine. I felt then that the regent had pledged himself again. He dared not tell me so, but he did not escape my reproaches. "Well, monsieur," I cried too roughly, "there you are in the mud-hole I have predicted to you so many times! You would not overthrow the bastards when the princes of the blood, the parliament, the entire public cried out for it and the whole world expected it. What did I tell you then? and what have I repeated ever since? That sooner or later you would be forced to it by the princes of the blood, at a time when it would not suit you to do it, and you might be forced to abet them at all risks. How are you going to get out of this? Believe me, evil for evil, this is the most dangerous."

The regent promises to hold firm against removing M. du Maine.

The regent groaned; but he promised he would hold firm against M. le Duc, and added that he wished I would see the latter after their interview and report to him the next day what effect it had upon him. He then said that he doubted whether the *lit de justice* could be held the day after the morrow (Tuesday) because the Keeper of the Seals doubted if he could be ready with the documents in time. This delay annoyed me; I feared it was the prelude to a longer delay, and then a change. I asked him to what day he postponed it, remarking that such strokes determined upon and then delayed were sure to become known, and with dangerous results. "To Friday," he replied. "Wednesday and Thursday are fête-days, and it can't be earlier." "Very good," I said, "provided, in any event, it *is* Friday." He seemed determined. As we parted he said: "We must avoid taking away the education at this time. It is my interest to do so later, all in good time, but this is not the proper time, and you are perfectly right. This M. le Duc frightens me; he wants it, and wants it so stoutly." "What do you mean by that?" I said. "Did you not tell me yesterday that M. le Duc did not want the education himself, and would not have it?" "Yes," replied the regent, "I understood him to say so; but you see he has his say and his unsay. He does not care for it, but he makes it a condition, and that does not suit me." "Monsieur," I said, in a firm tone, "indeed it does not. Make up your mind that he shall not have it; for I declare to you that if he has it you, with your nature, will distrust him, he will perceive it, worthy people will thrust themselves in for the purpose of parting you, and then there will be the devil between you, which will operate upon the State, the present, and the future. With these reflections I leave you to get my dinner." "There's my gourmand!" he said; "fine reflections, but dinner at the end." "Yes," I said, laughing, "dinner and not so much supper; but since it pleases you not to dine at all, ruminate over this while awaiting M. le Duc, and be prepared for the assault."

Let us return for a moment to the origin of this affair; that is to say, to the original cause that set it in motion. I have said that this was the private interests of Law, d'Argenson, and the Abbé Dubois. To those interests must be added that of the Duc de La Force, who, in order that he might enter the Council of Regency, stirred up Law, who was napping, and through him M. le Duc. So true is it that in matters that seem to rise up and speak for themselves (and, generally speaking, in all great affairs) we shall find, if we search carefully, that their original cause is some light thing, some personal interest, very incapable, one would think, of causing such effects.

The regent tells me that M. le Duc insists on having the education of the king.

I saw the Duc d'Orléans again in the evening, and asked him where he now was with M. le Duc. He answered, stopping short and turning towards me, for we were walking down the great gallery, that he had never seen a man so obstinate and that he frightened him. "But the result?" I said. "The result," he answered, "is that he wants the education of the king, and will not yield the point." I did not conceal from him that the accumulated number of his broken promises to M. le Duc was the cause of the latter's obstinacy at the present time. The Duc d'Orléans contested this, and said he did not tell the truth; but he let it be seen that there was no denying the just complaints of M. le Duc in this respect.

Then, passing to the mechanical arrangements for the *lit de justice* (for this conversation was very skippy), I said to him, and I don't know how I came to think of it, that the high seats could be raised only one step on account of the want of height at the Tuileries; but I thought that would be quite sufficient to mark the difference. Thereupon he grew excited; told me that things could not be done in that way, and that the high seats in parliament were always raised five steps. In vain I represented the mechanical difficulty; I told him that if I, whom he thought so set upon rank, was satisfied, he ought to be. Not at all. He ended by charging me to tell Fontanieu he must find some means to remedy this impropriety. This nearly drove me distracted; for, to cut the matter short, as the Duc d'Orléans had no dignity and cared for none either for himself or others, I strongly suspected that, feeling himself worsted by M. le Duc, and brought up before the wall of a *lit de justice*, he was seeking some way to break out of it. I feared that, not venturing to openly give up a project of this kind, he had seized on what he could find to make a delay, in the hope that the affair would be noised about and thus be defeated. This made me very uneasy; I tried during the rest of the conversation to clear up the point, but if the regent ever had the thought he hid it from me with the utmost caution.

Conversation between the regent and the Comte de Toulouse.

From that he passed to a very interesting topic. "Did I tell you," he said, "of a conversation I had Tuesday last with the Comte de Toulouse?" On my replying that he had not, he told me that, when they were alone together, the Comte de Toulouse had inquired if he might ask him a question, and this question was, whether he was satisfied with him and his conduct. On the most satisfactory assurances being given to him, followed by most suitable replies on his part, he said that he had still another inquiry to make, about his brother, who was very uneasy at a rumour going about that he and the Maréchal de Villeroy were about to be arrested. At this the regent laughed as if there were nothing in it; but, on being pressed, he replied that he had never thought of it. The comte asked if he might reassure his brother; on receiving a yes, he asked if the regent was content with him, and whence could the rumour have come. The regent replied that as to the rumour he was ignorant of the cause of it, but as for being content with M. du Maine, that he could not be. The comte then desired to know more; on which the Duc d'Orléans asked him what he thought of intriguing with parliament. The comte replied frankly that it would seem to him very criminal; and he asked if anything of that kind were laid to the charge of his brother. The regent replied that he could not doubt it, from very sure proofs, and immediately asked him what he should think of dealings in Spain with Cardinal Alberoni. "Worse," replied the comte, plainly, "I should regard that as nothing different from a State crime." And on the regent telling him that he knew the Duc du Maine to be guilty of it, the comte said he could not suspect his brother to that extreme; and he begged the regent to be very sure of the truth of it; as for himself, he considered the State and his Royal Highness as one and the same thing; therefore he could answer for himself, though he could not answer for his brother. I thought this conversation very important, and the reflections we made upon it prolonged our own.

After this the regent reverted to M. le Duc. He talked feebly, and I again conjured him to think well of the consequences of attacking M. du Maine and of giving the education to a prince of the obstinate temper of M. le Duc. After renewing those arguments once more I entreated him to feel sure that if he did take the education from M. du Maine the latter would not be more furious or irreconcilable if reduced to his proper rank in the peerage. The regent replied that he had wished to do that, but that M. le Duc was opposed to it, from the idea of separating us from the princes of the blood by an intermediate rank; and he was very glad to tell me this plainly, that I might not let myself be fooled by the talk of M. le Duc; with whom the point must be settled if he gave him the education of the king. On this I went away, with a beginning of hope, — always supposing that the education changed hands.

Fontanieu remedies the raised seats.

I had those high seats on the brain, and being resolved to take from the regent a pretext that I dreaded, I sent word to Fontanieu to expect me at his house. Together we found a way to give those high seats three good steps; but Fontanieu was miserable at the delay, fearing that his workmen might understand what he was making them do. Leaving his house I said to my servants, "Home!" but as we passed the Pont Tournant I pulled the cord, and got out at the garden of the Tuileries as if to enjoy the fine weather, and sent my carriage to wait for me at the end of the Pont Royal.

Meeting with M. le Duc in the garden of the Tuileries.

I soon found M. le Duc in the alley which runs along the base of the terrace over the river.[1] As this was the second time we had met in the same place I feared unexpected accidents and remarks. I made him take off his blue ribbon, which he put in his pocket. He had seen the Duc d'Orléans since I had done so, and I soon perceived that he had found him more pliant. That angered me, for I felt the consequences, and knew that I could never get the better of so determined a man after he had once seen the hope of obtaining what he wanted.

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[1] These conversations and negotiations, preliminary to, and quite essential for an understanding of, the famous *lit de justice*, are given at great length in the Memoir, with much repetition and detail. They are abridged here from nearly one hundred pages; but all the important points, as to historical facts and as to Saint-Simon's personal conduct, are given. — Tr.

I make a last effort to prevent an attack on the Duc du Maine. M. le Duc's reply.

[After a very long recapitulation of all the arguments] "Monsieur," replied M. le Duc, hastily, and like a man who was determined on his course, "pardon me if I speak to you freely. Your reasoning leads only to our letting these Messieurs the bastards cut our throats at their own good time and pleasure. Now, if the Duc d'Orléans is of that humour for his part, I am not so peaceable for mine. He is so great that he apparently expects to escape them one way or another, by force, or by gratitude for not having crushed them, in which, as I believe, he will find himself their dupe. I have not the same resources nor the same grandeur; in a word, monsieur, all depends on the education being given on Friday. If that is done I am one forever with the Duc d'Orléans; and we shall see, the princes of the blood being united, what the bastards can do. Otherwise my resentment will be too strong for me. It will never leave my heart. I know the difference between the regent and myself, but after all it is for him to say whether he wants me or whether he does not care if he loses me. He is regent and ought to be master enough to do things that are just, reasonable, and for his own personal interest. It is for him to will them, and to know how to do them; if not, it is not worth while to be for him."

This was cutting through the difficulties, not removing them. I was about to answer after a moment's silence, when he added with a gentle, subdued, and flattering air, "Monsieur, I beg your pardon for speaking so firmly, and I feel that I must seem to you very headstrong and very obstinate. I shall be very sorry if you should take a bad opinion of me, but I ask you to put yourself in my place; to weigh the position in which I find myself, and all the broken promises that have brought me to where we now are. I count upon your friendship; could you advise me to let myself be ruined? And do you not see that the end of this would be the firm establishment of M. du Maine over the king? That is the thing that makes me so firm; if you will weigh it well, what now seems to you obstinacy you will find to be necessity."

These words embarrassed me greatly, not for their politeness, which I could have paid off in compliments, but for their too solid determination, which was all the more grievous because it put us between two reefs. His alienation might lead to anything in France and in Spain on the one hand, on the other were all the troubles that would grow out of the course proposed. I collected myself as much as so important and keen a conversation would allow; I saw plainly that this decision of M. le Duc, coming at the end of all the arguments brought against him, left nothing to hope for from him. With this conviction I ceased to attempt the impossible and, content within myself with the testimony of my conscience as to the efforts I had made to defeat or elude his designs against the Duc du Maine, I thought myself at liberty to profit for our Order by that which I could not prevent for the good of the State.

M. le Duc gives me his word on the reduction of the bastards to their rank in the peerage.

I therefore said to M. le Duc that after having represented to him what I believed to be the danger in itself and the difficulties of this great affair, I should waste his time in vain if, having nothing further to bring forward I repeated the same things; that I saw with pain that although he felt the infinite embarrassment of the whole thing, his mind was made up; and that being so, and there being no remedy for it, I passionately desired its success. But before leaving him, I must entreat him to explain himself clearly with me as to the reduction of the bastards to their proper place in the peerage.

He replied that he consented willingly that they should have no other, and that I ought to have known that this was in one of the three edicts he had proposed and given to the Duc d'Orléans. "I understand you," I replied, "but it is one thing to allow it to be done, and another to will it. I entreat you not to forget that the intermediate rank is what has alienated the dukes from you, — I mean all those who have blood to the nails; I am not speaking of poor creatures like a Duc d'Estrées, a M. Mazarin, a M. d'Aumont, but of all those peers who feel themselves and hold themselves up, — dukes who were most at the hôtel de Condé through the ancient chrism of father to son in the civil wars. We do not now appear what we are, because we are a hundred times worse off than under past tyranny; but we feel ourselves no less, and we hold no less together, as you must have remarked on all occasions. Here is an occasion to devote us to you. Do not miss it; repair the past, and reduce the bastards to their proper rank in the peerage." M. le Duc did not answer for a moment, and then he said he wished I had seen the three edicts he had ordered drawn up and given to the Duc d'Orléans; that it was Millain who drew them up (I knew him well as the secretary of the chancellor, Pontchartrain), that he was a very capable and very honest man and I could trust him. We agreed that Millain should come to me the next morning with copies of the three edicts, and this readiness on my part seemed to give M. le Duc great pleasure. "Monsieur," he said, "I will do for this matter as I shall for the education; but give me your promise that you will do your best for that." "Gently, monsieur," I replied; "with your word you have mine, and, I dare to tell you, that of all the dukes, to be with you in all things, the king, the State, and the regent excepted, against whom, however, you will never desire anything; but as for M. du Maine, I can promise you no more than I have already promised, namely, to put the reasons for and against your wishes before the Duc d'Orléans, and if he decides as you wish, to put myself in, up to the neck, for your success."

I propose to keep the rank of the Comte de Toulouse unchanged.

After this I told him I thought a distinction ought to be made between the two brothers, and that we ought for the good of the State to yield the rank he now held to the Comte de Toulouse. "With all my heart," cried M. le Duc; "you know that I love the Comte de Toulouse, and, since you are willing, with all my heart I will contribute to leave him where he is. But how can it be done?" "Monsieur," I said, "I desire that one and the same decree should reduce the bastards to their rank in the peerage, and that another, made at the same moment, should restore to the Comte de Toulouse, for him alone, the full rank that he enjoys to-day, — no continuation of that rank in itself; the children excluded should he marry and have them. He will then have two courses to follow, and follow instantly: accept or refuse. Refuse? he will think twice before he sacrifices all that he is to a brother he neither likes nor respects, who, against his advice, has exposed himself to all this by unbridled ambition, which he has openly blamed in public and in private; nor will he sacrifice himself in this way to the caprices, follies, and furies of a sister-in-law, whom he abhors as a crazy woman, a mad woman, who has pushed his brother on to enterprises of which this is the issue. He would be mad himself to refuse, and he has men about him who will neglect nothing to force him to accept." "Monsieur," replied M. le Duc, "I am charmed to hear you say so. I will tell Millain to draw up a declaration for that purpose." "And I, monsieur," I continued, "will draw one up myself; so that it may be known that, for the good of the State, the peers did this act themselves against themselves."

All things foreseen and provided for the "lit de justice."

All things having been foreseen, remedies provided in case of mishaps, secrecy absolutely maintained, and nothing forgotten, I took leave of the Duc d'Orléans at ten o'clock of the night before [the *lit de justice*], exhorting him to rest as much as he could, to achieve the salvation of his regency by the acts of the morrow, and the triumph of those acts by his resolution, firmness, presence of mind, attention to little things, and above all by his self-possession. On leaving him, I asked permission to tell the secret to the Duc de Chaulnes, inasmuch as he must learn the shell of it in the course of the night by the order to bring out the light-horse, of which he was the captain; and he consented.

I confide the coming event to the Duc de Chaulnes.

On my way home, I stopped at the hôtel de Luynes, which is close to my house, and sent in to ask the Duc de Chaulnes to come and speak to me in my carriage. He came without his hat, got in, and immediately the coachman, who had his orders, drove off to my own door, without my saying a word till I reached my cabinet to the Duc de Chaulnes, who was much surprised to be abducted in this way. He was still more so when, after closing my doors, I told him of the great spectacle prepared for the next day. We gave ourselves up, he and I, to the rapture of a re-establishment that was so unexpected, so sudden, so secret; the mere hope of which, founded on so little, had alone sustained us under the horrid hammer of the late king. The dispersion, the melting away of those mountains, piled one after another by countless degrees upon our dignity by those giants of bastards, those Titans of France, their coming fall, the general surprise, but so different, so intense, both for them and for the peers; our renascence, our re-existence from past annihilation, — a hundred thoughts at a time dilated our hearts in a manner I cannot express. M. le Duc was not forgotten, nor Millain either, in this *tête-à-tête*. We parted at last under this great expectation.

Notice given of the "lit de justice" at six in the morning of August 26.

About five o'clock the next morning [Friday, August 26], drums were heard throughout the city, and presently the soldiers were seen in motion. At six o'clock La Grange was at the parliament delivering his summons. Messieurs (to use their language) were just assembling. They sent for the president, who called the Chambers together. All this took half an hour; after which they replied that they would obey. Then they debated in what way they should go to the Tuileries, whether in carriages or on foot. The latter was chosen as the ordinary form, and in the hope of exciting the people and arriving at the Tuileries attended by a howling mob. The rest will be related in its place farther on. The French guards and the Suisses were under arms in quarters, the cavalry patrol and two companies of mousquetaires each ready in their guard-house, and only the ordinary guard of the regiments of the French and Suisse guards on duty at the Tuileries.

If I had slept little for the last week I slept still less on this last night, on the eve of events so important. I rose before six and soon after received my notification to attend a *lit de justice*. At seven o'clock an usher of the Duc d'Orléans brought me a notice of a meeting of the Council of Regency at eight o'clock, with an order to come in mantle. I dressed myself in black, because I had no other suit with mantle, except one of magnificent gold cloth, which I would not wear, — to give no ground for saying, though most untruly, that I intended to insult parliament and the Duc du Maine. I took with me two gentlemen; and I went to be a witness of all that was about to be done. I was full, at one and the same time, of fear, hope, joy, reflection, distrust of the regent's weakness, and of all that might result. I was also firmly resolved to serve my best in every way that might present itself, but without appearing to know anything, without eagerness; and I anchored myself on presence of mind, attention, circumspection, modesty, and an air of moderation.

I notify the Comte de Toulouse of his safety.

Leaving my own door, I went to that of Valincourt, who lived opposite to the back door of the hôtel de Toulouse. He was a man of honour, great intelligence, mingling in the best company, secretary-general of the navy, who had been with the Comte de Toulouse from his earliest youth. I wished to let no personal fears assail the Comte de Toulouse, or expose him to be led by his brother. I sent, therefore, to ask Valincourt to come and speak to me. He came, half-dresssed, alarmed by the noises in the streets, and asked me what it meant. I took him by the head, and said: "Listen to me well, and do not lose a word. Go at once to M. le Comte de Toulouse, and tell him from me to trust my word; to be wise. Things are about to happen which may displease him in regard to others, but he may rely on the assurance that not a hair of his head will be touched. I wish him not to have one moment's uneasiness. Go, and lose no time." Valincourt embraced me as well as he could. "Ah! monsieur," he said, "we have long foreseen that the storm would come. It is well deserved; but not by M. le Comte, who will be eternally obliged to you." He warned him instantly, and the Comte de Toulouse, who knew later that I had saved him from a fall like that of his brother, never forgot it.

I arrive at the Tuileries. The "lit de justice" promptly and secretly arranged.

At eight o'clock I arrived in the grand courtyard of the Tuileries, without having remarked anything extraordinary on the way. The carriages of the Duc de Noailles and the Maréchaux de Villars and d'Huxelles and some others were already there. I went up without meeting many persons, and I had the doors of entry and the issue through the guard-room opened for me. The grand antechamber where the king took his meals was prepared for the *lit de justice.* I stopped there a moment to consider carefully if all was in proper order, and I congratulated Fontanieu in a whisper. He told me that he did not arrive at the Tuileries with his workmen and his materials till six o'clock in the morning; that all had been so luckily put up and handled that the king had heard nothing of it; that the head *valet de chambre* coming out of the king's bedroom about seven o'clock, had been amazed; that the Maréchal de Villeroy had only heard of it through him; there had been so little noise made in putting up the materials that no one had discovered anything. After examining everything carefully with my eye, I advanced to the throne, which they were just finishing, intending to go into the second antechamber; but attendants came after me and said I could not pass that way for it was closed. I asked where we were to gather while awaiting the meeting of the Council, and where those persons were whose carriages I had seen in the courtyard. Several attendants offered to show me the way upstairs, and ushered me through a door which was guarded, but was opened to admit me when I appeared. There I found the Keeper of the Seals and

La Vrillière, with all their array of papers and things. We were very glad to be once more alone together for a last consultation before the operations. But it was not what I had proposed to myself. I had seen no carriages but those of dangerous persons in the courtyard; under pretence of being ignorant of everything, and without affectation of any kind, I wanted to go where they were, to upset their conference and learn from their behaviour all that I could. But as I had tumbled by chance into the room of the Keeper of the Seals I thought it would seem a forced thing to ask to be taken elsewhere, so I gave up my first intention.

Tranquillity of the Keeper of the Seals.

The Keeper of the Seals was standing, holding a crust of bread, as much himself as if it were only a matter of the usual Council, — without perplexity as to all that was about to devolve upon him, or embarrassment at having to speak in public on matters so unusual, so important, and so susceptible of miscarriage. He seemed to me anxious only as to the firmness of the regent; filled, and justly so, with the thought that this was no time to weaken, still less to recede one inch. I reassured him as to that, far more than I could reassure myself. I asked them if their measures were taken to be informed from moment to moment of what was going on in parliament. They answered yes, and they were, in fact, very well served. I then wished, not to read, for that was useless, but to see all the documents to be enregistered. They showed them to me in their order. I wished also to look more closely at the one relating to the reduction of the bastards to their rank of seniority in the peerage. "Here," said the Keeper of the Seals, showing it to me, "Here is your affair." I mention this because it was told afterwards as a proof that I was in the secret; it was apparently overheard by some listener with his ear at the door; for we were all three alone with the door closed. I wished to look over the principal clauses; they assured me nothing had been changed, and I saw that later when I listened to the reading of the document. I had the same curiosity about the declaration in favour of the Comte de Toulouse with the same answer and the same assurance. Then I made them show me the Seals uncovered in their velvet bag and the *instruments de précaution,* signed and sealed, and all ready in case of need. There were two large velvet bags filled with these things which the Keeper of the Seals never left out of his sight and which were carried under his eyes and placed at his feet, both at the Council and at the *lit de justice,* because the Seals were in them. Not a soul knew of all this but the regent, M. le Duc, the Keeper of the Seals, La Vrillière [secretary to the Council of Regency] and myself. The wax heater with the sealing implements was in the adjoining room, with water and fire lighted, all ready without any one observing it. As we were finishing our survey, still planning for what might happen, they came to tell us that the regent was coming. We finished in a second what we still had to look at and to say, and while he was taking his robe from the *lit de justice* so as not to have to change it after the Council, I went down in order not to appear to have come with him; and I made La Vrillière wait awhile that we might not enter the Council-chamber together.

The regent arrives at the Tuileries.

Since the great heat had begun, the Council had been held in the last room of the suite, because the king, being uncomfortable in his very small bedroom, had come to sleep in the Council-chamber; but, on this great day, as soon as the king was out of bed he was taken to be dressed in his little room, and thence into his cabinet. The bed-clothes were then taken from his bed and from that of the Maréchal de Villeroy, at the feet of which they placed the table for the Council, which was there held. Entering the preceding room I found it full of people whom the first rumour of these unexpected events had doubtless brought there, among them some of the Council. The Duc d'Orléans was in a knot of persons at the farther end of the room, and, as I heard later, had just left the king, with whom he had found the Duc du Maine in mantle, who had followed him to the door when he left the room, though neither of them said a word to the other.

Appearance of the Council-chamber.

After a slight glance at this crowd I entered the Council-chamber, where I found most of those who composed the Council scattered about with serious looks and an air of great concentration of mind, which increased my own. Almost no one spoke to his neighbour; and each, standing or sitting here and there, remained where he was. I joined no one, in order to examine all. A moment later the Duc d'Orléans entered, with a gay, free manner, without any emotion, looking round upon the assembly with a smiling air, which seemed to me of good augury. A moment later I asked him how he was. He answered aloud that he was pretty well, and then he added in my ear that, except for being waked to give orders, he had slept well and had now come determined not to give way. This pleased me infinitely, for it seemed to me, from his whole bearing, that he told the truth, and I exhorted him in two words to keep to it.

Next came M. le Duc, who was not long in coming up to me to ask if I augured well of the regent and whether he held firm. The prince had an air of high-strung gayety which made itself felt by those who were in the secret. The Prince de Conti, morose, absent-minded, jealous of his brother-in-law, seemed preoccupied, but about nothing. The

Duc de Noailles devoured all with his eyes, which sparkled with anger at seeing himself left out on so great a day — for he knew absolutely nothing. I had earnestly requested this of M. le Duc, thinking their intimacy greater than I found it to be. He regarded him with distrust, without esteem, still less friendship, — independently of what he now had to fear from him in connection with the Duc du Maine.

Entrance of the Duc du Maine.

The latter appeared in mantle, entering by the little door from the king's room. Never did he make so many, nor such profound bows, of which at no time was he stingy. He stood alone, leaning on his stick, near to the Council table on the side of the beds, observing every one. It was there, directly opposite to him, the table between us, that I made him the most smiling bow I ever made him in my life, and with the most deep-felt delight. He returned it in kind, and continued to watch every one, with eyes that were almost staring, and an agitated face, talking the while to himself almost continually.

No one seemed to ask himself what all this might mean; each member of the Council knew of the resolution to break the edicts of the parliament, having been present at that deliberation. The present Council was the special Council then appointed, afterwards postponed, to receive the judgment of the committee on annulling the edicts. It seemed clear to all that this was now to be done and the decree enregistered at once; not perhaps without some vexation at the surprise of a *lit de justice*, especially among those who thought themselves the privileged confidants of the regent. M. le Duc came to me again to express his regret at seeing the Duc du Maine in mantle, and to urge me to strengthen the regent. The Keeper of the Seals came to me for the same purpose. A moment later the regent himself came up, much annoyed at the mantle, but not showing any weakness. I told him that he might have expected it, and to show any softening now would be his ruin, for the Rubicon was passed. I added what I could that was strong and concise to sustain him, and not seem too long in conference with him. As soon as he left me M. le Duc, uneasy and impatient, came to inquire in what disposition of mind I found him. I answered, "Good," in a monosyllable, and sent him to talk with him.

I do not know if these movements, on which all present began to fix their eyes, alarmed the Duc du Maine, but no sooner had M. le Duc left me than the Duc du Maine went to speak to the Maréchal de Villeroy and to d'Effiat, who were seated next to each other near the little door to the king's room, with their backs to the wall. They did not rise for the Duc du Maine, who stood opposite and very close to them, while they all three conferred in a low tone for some time, like men who were deliberating with embarrassment and surprise; so it seemed to me from the faces of the two who were seated, which I tried not to lose from sight. During this time the Duc d'Orléans and M. le Duc were talking together at the window near the entrance, where the Keeper of the Seals, who was rather near to them, joined them. M. le Duc at one moment turned slightly, which enabled me to make him a sign to look at the other conference, which he saw instantly. I was alone, near the table, very observant of everything, and the others, scattered about, were beginning to be so. Soon after, the Duc du Maine came back to the place he had quitted, the other two remaining where they were. M. du Maine was therefore again opposite to me, the table between us. I observed his distracted air, and that he talked to himself even more than before.

Entrance of the Comte de Toulouse.

The Comte de Toulouse arrived in mantle and bowed to the company with a grave and concentrated manner; he was neither approached by nor approaching any one. The Duc d'Orléans was opposite to him and turned to me, although at some distance, to show me his regret. I lowered my head and looked at him fixedly as if to say, "Well, what of it?" He then advanced to the Comte de Toulouse and said aloud, in the hearing of those who were nearest, that he was surprised to see him in mantle; that he had not had him notified of the *lit de justice* because he knew that since the last decision against them he had not liked to attend the parliament. The Comte de Toulouse replied that that was true; but when the good of the State was concerned he put all such considerations aside. The Duc d'Orléans turned round instantly without replying, and came to me, and said in a low voice, pushing me farther away: "That man cuts me to the heart. Do you know what he said to me?"—and he repeated it. I praised the act of the one and the feeling of the other; and reminded the regent that the Comte's reinstatement being certain, and at the same session, he need not feel troubled about him, and I gently set to work to comfort him. He interrupted me to say that he had a great desire to tell him all. I represented that that would be a very delicate thing to do, and before resolving upon it it was better to wait for emergencies. I turned, immediately, to bring him among the others, so as to shorten this private colloquy, which I feared might be remarked. The Comte de Toulouse noticed us, and remained where he was; and others saw us, too, standing apart.

The Duc du Maine had returned to the Maréchal de Villeroy and d'Effiat, the two still seated, and he in front of them, as before. I saw that the little conclave was greatly excited. It lasted some time, during which M. le Duc came to speak to me and the Keeper of the Seals joined us, both uneasy at the effect produced by the entrance of the Comte de Toulouse, and the regent's private talk with me. I told them what had occurred, and got away from them as fast as possible. What hastened me the more was that I perceived that the Duc de Noailles never took his eyes off me, and followed by sight every movement that I made, even changing his place or posture to see me better. The Duc de La Force tried to join me, but I evaded him; then La Vrillière, to whom I said a word and sent him to tell the Keeper of the Seals to fortify the regent. The Duc du Maine now quitted his two men and made a sign to his brother to come and speak to him at the foot of Maréchal de Villeroy's bed, where he posted himself. He spoke briefly, with agitation; the other replied in the same way, apparently not agreeing. The Duc du Maine spoke again; then the Comte de Toulouse passed between the foot of the two beds and the table to the fireplace, where the Duc d'Orléans stood with M. le Duc, and stopped at a little distance, like a man who is waiting to speak. The Duc d'Orléans, as soon as he perceived him, left M. le Duc and went to the Comte de Toulouse. They turned their noses to the wall, and this lasted some time without any one being able to judge, because nothing was seen but their backs, and there seemed no emotion and scarcely any gesture.

Colloquies of the Duc du Maine and others.

The Duc du Maine still stood where he had spoken to his brother. His face looked half-dead; he glanced furtively at the colloquy to which he had sent his brother; then he passed his haggard eyes over the company with the anxiety of a guilty man and the agitation of a condemned one. At that moment the Maréchal d'Huxelles called me.

He was opposite the Duc du Maine, the table between them, but his back was towards it, consequently towards the Duc du Maine. The maréchal was in a group with the Maréchaux de Tallard and d'Estrées and the former Bishop of Troyes. The Duc de Noailles joined this group at the same time that I did. Huxelles asked me what all these comings and goings meant, and on my replying by asking him the same question, he inquired if there would be any difficulty at the *lit de justice* about these princes or the children of the Duc du Maine. I replied that with regard to MM. du Maine and de Toulouse there could be none, because the judgment given between the princes of the blood and themselves left them in the enjoyment of their honours; but that as for the children of the Duc du Maine, the peers would certainly not allow it.

Colloquy of the regent with the Comte de Toulouse.

We remained for some little time thus grouped, — I occupied in looking at M. du Maine, and turning sometimes to look at the colloquy between the regent and the Comte de Toulouse, which still went on. They separated at last, and I had time to observe the two brothers well, because the Comte de Toulouse came past us along the foot of the beds, on the other side of the table, to his brother who still stood alone, leaning on his stick, at the foot of Maréchal de Villeroy's bed. The Comte de Toulouse had a pained, even an angry air. The Duc du Maine, seeing him come to him in that way, changed colour.

I was standing there, very attentive, watching them meet (the Duc du Maine not stirring from his place), in order to penetrate their conversation with my eyes, when I heard myself called. It was the Duc d'Orléans, who, after making a few steps alone past the fireplace, wanted to speak to me. I joined him and found him in trouble of heart. "I have just told him all," he said, instantly; "I could not keep it back. That is the most honourable man in the world, and it wrings my heart." "How, monsieur?" I asked; "what have you said to him?" "He came to me from his brother, who had spoken to him, to tell me of the embarrassment in which he found himself; he said he felt that something was prepared against him; that he saw that he was not standing well with me, and he had requested his brother to ask me if I wished him to remain, or if he should not do better to retire. I own to you that I thought I did best to reply that he would do well to retire, inasmuch as he asked me. Thereupon, the Comte de Toulouse wanted to enter upon explanations; but I cut him short, and told him that, for himself, he might rest in peace, because he would remain what he was without any alteration; but that painful things might occur for M. du Maine, which he would do well not to witness. The Comte de Toulouse asked me how it was possible for him to remain as he was when his brother was attacked; adding that they were one, because they were brothers and from honour. I answered that I was very sorry for that; all I could do was to recognize merit and virtue and keep them separate; then, after a few friendly remarks which he received coldly, he returned to his brother. Do you think I did wrong?" "No," I said, for it was no longer a question to discuss, and still less did I want to dishearten a man we were trying to strengthen. "I am very glad of it," I added. "It was speaking plainly, as a man who has all his measures taken and fears nothing. Therefore, monsieur, you must show the more firmness after taking that engagement." He seemed very resolute, but at the same time most desirous that the bastards should go away, which was (as I thought I saw) the true motive for what he had just done.

The bastards retire from the Council chamber.

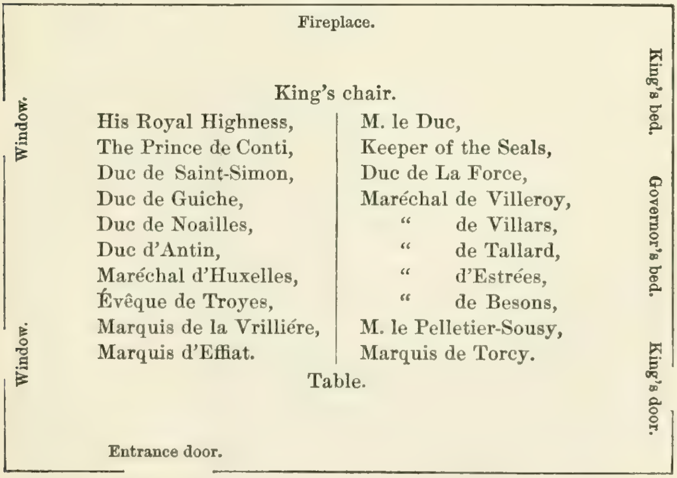
The Duc du Maine, pale and deathlike, seemed to me about to be taken ill; he moved with difficulty to the lower end of the table, which was near him, while the Comte de Toulouse came round to say a word to the regent and then walked the length of the cabinet. All these movements were made in the twinkling of an eye. The regent, who stood close to the king's armchair, said aloud, "Come, messieurs, let us take our places." Every man approached his own, and as I stood behind mine I saw the two brothers close to the door of entry as if they were going away. I sprang, so to speak, between the king's armchair and the regent to prevent the Prince de Conti from overhearing me, and I said, with emotion, in the regent's ear, "Monsieur, they are going!" "I know it," he said tranquilly. "But," I replied excitedly, "do you know what they will do when they are once outside?" "Nothing at all," he said; "the Comte de Toulouse came to ask my permission for his brother and himself to leave. He assured me they would act properly." "But suppose they do not?" I urged. "But they will, and if not, sure orders are given to watch them." "But suppose they commit some folly or leave Paris?" "They will be arrested; there are sure orders, I assure you." Thereupon, feeling more tranquil, I took my seat. I was hardly in it before he recalled me and said that, as the brothers had gone away, he was changing his mind and now thought he had better tell all that concerned them to the Council. I replied that as the sole obstacle to this was removed by their departure, I thought it would be a great mistake not to tell it to the Council. He communicated this intention to M. le Duc in a low voice across the table and the king's armchair, then he called up the Keeper of the Seals, and they both approved, after which we all took our places.

The Council take their seats.

All these movements had increased the trouble and curiosity of every one. The eyes of all, occupied with the regent, were turned away from the door of entry, so that most persons did not see the departure of the bastards. As each person noticed that they were not in their places he looked round in search of them, and waited for them, standing. I put myself in the seat of the Comte de Toulouse. The Duc de Guiche, who sat on the other side of me, left a vacant space between us, with his nose in the air, still awaiting the bastards. He told me to move next to him, and said I had mistaken my seat. I made no answer, and watched the assembly, for it was truly a spectacle. At the second or third summons, I answered that, on the contrary, he ought to come to me. "But M. le Comte de Toulouse?" he persisted. "Come here," I said, seeing him lost in astonishment and looking for the Duc du Maine, whose seat the Keeper of the Seals had now taken. I pulled him by his coat, I being seated, saying to him, "Come here and sit down." I pulled him so hard that he sat down next to me, comprehending nothing. "But what is all this?" he said to me, as soon as he was seated; "where are those *messieurs?*" "I don't know," I said impatiently, "but they are not here." Meantime the Duc de Noailles, who sat next the Duc de Guiche, furious at being no one in the grand preparation of the day, had apparently comprehended, by dint of gazing at me and examining me, that I was in the game, and, vanquished by curiosity, he leaned over the table in front of the Duc de Guiche and said to me: "In God's name, monsieur, do me the favour to tell me what all this means!" I was not on any terms with him, as I have often shown, but was much accustomed to treat him very badly. I therefore looked at him with a cold, disdainful air, and after having heard him, and looked at him, I turned away my head. That was my only answer. The Duc de Guiche pressed me to tell him something; he even said that I knew all. I denied it steadily. Every one present took his seat very slowly, because each was so occupied in looking and divining what all this could mean, and was long in comprehending that we were expected to take our places without the bastards, though no one opened his lips upon the subject.

Tableau of the Council.

But before entering on what passed at the Council, it is best to give a sketch of the session of that day and the arrangement of the room in which it was held, to make what I have already related more intelligible, and to throw a better light on what follows.


Fireplace.
King's chair.
Window.
His Royal Highness,
The Prince de Conti,
Duc de Saint-Simon,
Duc de Guiche,
Duc de Noailles,
Duc d'Antin,
Maréchal d'Huxelles,
Évêque de Troyes,
Marquis de la Vrillière,
Marquis d'Effiat.
Window.
M. le Duc,
Keeper of the Seals,
Duc de La Force,
Maréchal de Villeroy,
" de Villars,
" de Tallard,
" d'Estrées,
" de Besons,
M. le Pelletier-Sousy,
Marquis de Torcy.
King's bed.
Governor's bed.
King's door.
Table.
Entrance door.

I should remark, as to these sessions, that the Maréchal d'Huxelles always sat on the right, to read the despatches with light from the window, and the Bishop of Troyes always sat next him to help him with his reading. On this occasion, the Keeper of the Seals had, on the ground at his feet, the black velvet bag in which were the Seals, with the *instruments de précaution,* signed and sealed; the other bag was before him on the table, where he had arranged all the documents he was to read to the Council, in the order in which each was to be read, and those that were also to be enregistered; all these papers and documents were also to be read at the *lit de justice.* The king, meantime, was in his cabinet, and did not appear at all in the room where the Council was held.

VII.

WHEN all present were seated, and the regent had observed for a moment the whole assembly, whose eyes were fixed upon him, he said that he had called together this Council of Regency to listen to the reading of what had been resolved upon at the last session. He thought there was no way to enregister the edict of the Council which they were about to hear, except that of a *lit de justice;* and as the great heat did not permit of risking the health of the king in a crowd at the Palace of the parliament, he had thought best to follow the example of the late king, who had sometimes made his parliament come to the Tuileries. Also, inasmuch as it was necessary to hold this *lit de justice*, he judged it advisable to profit by the occasion to cause to be enregistered the *lettres de provision* of the Keeper of the Seals, and to begin the session by so doing; and he ordered the Keeper of the Seals to read them.

Speech of the regent.

During this reading, which had no other importance than that of seizing an occasion to force parliament to recognize the Keeper of the Seals, whose person and commission it hated, I busied myself in studying the faces of those present. I saw in the Duc d'Orléans an air of authority and attention, which was so new to me that I was struck by it. M. le Duc, gay and brilliant, seemed to have no misgivings. The Prince de Conti, dazed, absorbed and self-contained, seemed to see nothing and to take no part in anything. The

Tableau of the Council.

Keeper of the Seals, grave and thoughtful, appeared to have too many things in his head; and, indeed, he had much to do for a first essay. Nevertheless, he displayed himself, with his bag, as a very firm, very decided, and very clear-headed man. The Duc de La Force, with furtive eyes, examined everybody. The Maréchaux de Villeroy and de Villars spoke to each other now and then; both had irritated eyes and crestfallen faces. No one composed himself better than Maréchal de Tallard, but even he could not stifle an inward excitement which frequently gleamed externally. Maréchal d'Estrées looked stupefied, and as if he saw a gulf before him. Maréchal de Besons, enveloped more than usual in a monstrous wig, seemed to be nursing his wrath with an angry eye. Pelletier, his manner easy and simply curious, looked about him at everything. Torcy, thrice as stiff as usual, seemed considering all things stealthily. D'Effiat, fiery, nettled, incensed, ready to fly at any one, frowned at everybody, with haggard eyes, which he cast precipitately and by dashes on all sides. Those on my own side I could not well examine; I only saw them at moments, through changes of posture of one or another; and if curiosity made me advance my head over the table and turn it, to give a glance at them obliquely, it was rarely and very briefly. I have already spoken of the astonishment of the Duc de Guiche, and the curiosity and vexation of the Duc de Noailles. D'Antin, always so free in his bearing, seemed to me awkward, embarrassed, almost terrified. Maréchal d'Huxelles tried to look at his ease, but failed to cover the despair that stung him. Old Troyes, quite bewildered, showed nothing but surprise, embarrassment, and not knowing properly where he was.

From the moment of this first reading, coupled with the departure of the Duc du Maine and the Comte de Toulouse, every one saw, after what had passed in the Council chamber before the sitting began, that something was preparing against the bastards. The more or the less of that something and its nature held the minds of all present in suspense, and this, joined to a *lit de justice* no sooner announced than ready to be carried out, showed a great resolution taken against parliament, and also revealed such firmness and decision in a prince considered to be incapable of either that the ground fell away from the feet of the cabal. Each, according to his bias for the bastards or for parliament, seemed expectant with terror of what was to happen. Others appeared deeply wounded at having no part in the affair and being left to the general surprise, as if the regent were escaping them. No faces were ever so elongated, no perplexity more general or more marked. In this first trouble of mind I think that few gave ear to the letters which the Keeper of the Seals was reading. When that was over, the Duc d'Orléans said that he thought it was not worth while to take the votes one by one, either on the contents of those documents or their registration; and he likewise thought that all would agree to begin the session of the *lit de justice* in the same way.

Speeches of the regent and the Keeper of the Seals.

After a short, though marked pause, the regent stated in few words the reason that had led the last Council of Regency to decide upon annulling the decrees of parliament which had been read before it, and to do this by an edict of the Council itself. He said that under the present behaviour of parliament, to send that edict to be registered by parliament would only compromise anew the king's authority; for that body would make public its formal disobedience by refusing to enregister it; that, as there was no other way than a *lit de justice* to obtain the registration, he had thought it wise to keep the summons secret to the last moment, in order to give no opening for cabals and no time for evil-intentioned persons to prepare for disobedience; that he thought, together with the Keeper of the Seals, that the frequency and the manner of the remonstrances of parliament required that that Assembly should be brought back within the limits of its duty, which, for some time past, it had lost sight of; that the Keeper of the Seals would now read to the Council an edict which contained the annulment of the decrees, and the rules to be observed by parliament in future. Then, looking at the Keeper of the Seals, "Monsieur," he said, "you can explain this better than I to these gentlemen; have the goodness to do so before reading the edict."

The Keeper of the Seals then spoke, paraphrasing what his Royal Highness had said more briefly; he explained what was the usage of parliamentary remonstrance; whence it came, its utility, its inconveniences, its limits, the abuse that had been made of it, the distinction of the royal authority from the authority of parliament emanating from the king, the incompetence of the tribunals in matters of State and finance, and the necessity of counteracting their assumption of power by some sort of code (that was the term he used), which should be in future the invariable rule for the form and substance of the said remonstrance. All that explained, without prolixity and with precision and grace, he read the edict as it is printed and in everybody's hands, with a few trifling exceptions, but so slight that they escape my mind.

The reading over, the regent, against his custom, showed his own opinion by the praises he gave to the document. Then, taking an air and tone of regent which no one had ever yet seen in him, and which

Opinions given.

completed the amazement of the company, he added: "For to-day, *messieurs*, I shall depart from the usual method of taking the votes, and I think it will be well that I should do so throughout this Council." Then, after a slight glance down each side of the table, during which you might have heard a worm creep, he turned to M. le Duc and asked his opinion. M. le Duc gave it for the edict, adducing a few short but strong reasons. The Prince de Conti answered in the same direction; I next, for the opinion of the Keeper of the Seals was given on reading the document. I gave the same, more generally (though quite as strongly), in order not to fall uselessly on parliament, and also not to arrogate to myself to support his Royal Highness in the manner of the princes of the blood. Every one spoke, most of them very little; some, such as the Maréchaux de Villeroy, Villars, Estrées, Besons, M. de Troyes, and d'Effiat showed their sorrow at not daring to resist the resolution taken, which it was clear they had no hope of modifying. Dejection was painted on all their faces; and he could see who chose that the blow to parliament was neither what they desired nor what they had expected to happen. Tallard was the only one of them in which this did not show; but the choking monosyllable of Maréchal d'Huxelles made the last vestige of his mask disappear. The Duc de Noailles controlled himself with such difficulty that he said more than he meant to say. The Duc d'Orléans spoke last, but with very unusual force; after which he made another pause, and passed his eyes slowly over the whole Council.

At this moment the Maréchal de Villeroy, full of his own thoughts, said between his teeth, "But will they come?" The regent gently took up the remark, and said that the parliament had assured Des Granges they would do so; remarking that he did not doubt they would obey; adding immediately that notice must be given to him when parliament had begun their march. The Keeper of the Seals replied that this would be done. The regent went on to say that it would be better to give an order at the door, and instantly there was M. de Troyes upon his feet. Fear seized me that he would go and gabble at the door, and I ran to it quicker than he. As I returned, d'Antin, who had turned to catch me on my way back, begged me in mercy to tell him what all this meant. I slipped past, saying that I knew nothing about it. "Pooh!" he said, "tell that to others." As I sat down, the Duc d'Orléans said something, I don't know what, and again M. de Troyes was in the air, and I too, as before. Passing La Vrillière, I whispered to him to seize upon all errands to the door, for fear of M. de Troyes' chatter, or that of others, because, from the distance I was from the door, my going was too marked. This proved to be essential, and La Vrillière did it well. As I returned to my place, d'Antin, again in ambush, implored me in God's name; but I held firm, and said to him, "You will see." The Duc de Guiche also pressed me uselessly, even to saying that he knew I was in the bottle; to which I turned a deaf ear.

Speech of the regent on the reduction of the bastards.

These little movements over, the Duc d'Orléans sat up erect by half a foot on his seat, and said to the assembly, in a tone that was still more firm and more masterful than before, that he had another affair to propose, more important than the one they had just listened to. This prelude revived the astonishment on all faces, and made all hearers motionless. After a moment's silence, the regent said that when he had decided the suit which had lately arisen between the princes of the blood and the legitimatized — *légitimés* (that was the term he used, without adding the word "princes") — he had reasons for not going farther; but he was none the less bound to do justice to the peers of France, who had demanded more at that time of the king, in a petition of their whole body which his Majesty had received and which he himself, the regent, had communicated to the *légitimés*: that this justice due to so illustrious a body, composed of the grandees of the kingdom, the first seigneurs of the State, all persons most highly endowed, most of whom were distinguished for services they had rendered to the king, could no longer be delayed: that at the time their petition was made he thought it best for certain reasons not to take action upon it; he therefore felt it the more urgent not to defer an act of justice which ought no longer to be held in abeyance, and which the peers desired above everything else: that it was with pain that he saw persons — *gens* (that was the word he used) — who were so nearly related to him, raised to a rank of which they were the first examples; a rank continually being magnified in defiance of all laws: that he could not close his eyes to the fact that the favour of certain princes, and this quite recently, had inverted the order of the rank of the peerage: that such detriment done to that dignity had never lasted longer than the authority which had forced the laws, — as in the cases of the Ducs de Joyeuse and d'Épernon and the MM. de Vendôme, who had been reduced to their seniority of rank in the peerage on the deaths of Henri III. and Henri IV.: that equity, good order, the just cause of so many persons of the first dignity and consideration in the State did not allow him any further denial of justice: that the *légitimés* had had ample time to reply, but they had failed to allege any valid reason against the force of the laws and past examples: that the question now was simply to do justice on a petition existing and pending, of which it could not be alleged that any one was uninformed: and in order to pronounce that judgment he had caused to be drawn up the declaration that the Keeper of the Seals would now read to them, in order that it might be enregistered at the *lit de justice* which the king was about to hold.

Effect of the regent's speech.

A deep silence followed a speech so little expected, and which began to unfold the enigma of the departure of the bastards. A sombre brown overspread the faces of many present. Anger sparkled on those of the Maréchaux de Villars, de Besons, d'Effiat, and even d'Estrées. Tallard became stupid for several moments; the Maréchal de Villeroy lost countenance. I could not see d'Huxelles, which I regretted much, nor the Duc de Noailles except obliquely, now and then. I had my own face to compose, for the eyes of all were turned to me successively. Upon it I had laid a veneer of additional gravity and modesty. I ruled my eyes to slowness, and only looked out horizontally at a level. As soon as the regent opened his lips in the matter, M. le Duc had cast a triumphant glance to me, which nearly upset my composure and warned me to double my gravity and not expose my eyes to contact with his. Restrained in this manner, attentively devouring the air of all, conscious of all, and of myself too, motionless, glued to my seat, rigid in body, filled with all that joy can give most keen, most vivid, — agitation that was charming, enjoyment immoderately and most persistently longed for, — I sweated with the anguish of controlling my transports; but that anguish was a delight which I never felt before, nor since, that glorious day. How inferior are the pleasures of the senses to those of the mind! How true it is that the measure of our woes is that of the joys that end them!

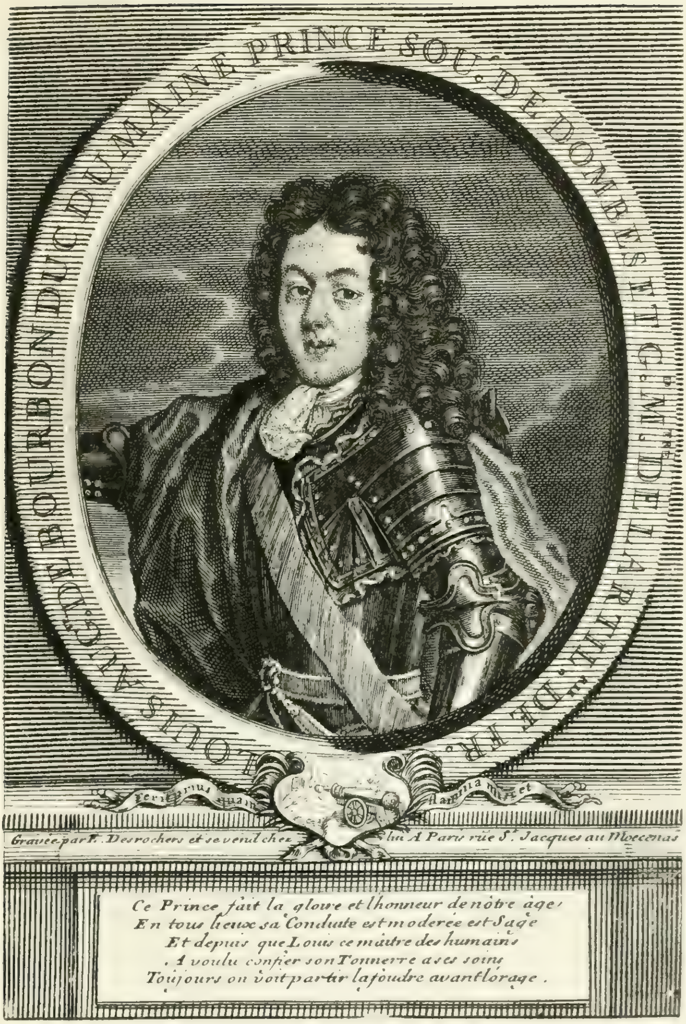
A moment after the regent had finished speaking he told the Keeper of the Seals to read the declaration. He read it immediately, without preliminary remarks such as he had made on the preceding matter. During this reading, which no music could equal to my ears, my attention was divided between judging whether it was precisely the same as that which Millain had drawn up and shown to me (I had the satisfaction to find it was) and observing the impression made on those present. A very few moments showed me, by the new alteration of their faces, what was passing in their souls, and a few more warned me, by the despair that seized on Maréchal de Villeroy and the fury which overtook Villars, that some remedy must be instantly applied, lest the excitement of which they were no longer masters might drive them to some positive act. I had that remedy in my pocket, and I drew it forth. It was our petition against the bastards, and I laid it before me on the table, open at the last page, which contained all our signatures printed in huge capitals. They were incontinently seen and, no doubt, recognized by the two marshals, as I judged by the sullen depression of their eyes, which immediately succeeded and extinguished a certain look of menace, especially in Maréchal de Villars. My two neighbours asked me what that paper was. I told them and showed them the signatures. Everybody looked at that queer document, but nobody asked about a thing so instantly recognized; the fact of neighbourhood alone made the Prince de Conti and the Duc de Guiche ask the question; though they were two men who, while very different from each other, never saw what they did see. I had hesitated a moment in making this demonstration between the fear of showing too plainly that I was in the secret, and the risk of the outbreak. I saw the two marshals so near to making one, and I feared the success that outbreak might have. Nothing, I knew, could control them so much

Reading of the declaration. Effect upon the Council.

as the sight of their own signatures. But to show that document after they had spoken would only have served to cover them with shame and would not have stopped the harm their outbreak would have excited. I therefore did what I thought surest, and I had reason to think it was useful.

Votes taken; I abstain from voting.

The whole reading was listened to with the deepest attention, joined to the deepest emotion. When it was over, the regent said that he was very sorry for this necessity, which affected his brothers-in-law, but that he owed as much justice to the peers as to the princes of the blood. Then, turning to the Keeper of the Seals he ordered him to give his vote. This he did briefly and worthily in good language, but like a dog that runs on embers; and he voted for the registration. After that, his Royal Highness, looking round on every one, said he should continue to take the votes by heads, and he called on M. le Duc to give his. The latter was short, but vigorous and courteous to the peers; the Prince de Conti, of the same opinion, but shorter. Then the Duc d'Orléans asked for mine. I made, against my custom, a profound bow, but without rising, and said that, having the honour to be the senior peer of the Council, I offered his Royal Highness my most humble thanks, together with those of all the peers of France, for the justice so ardently desired, which he had now resolved to grant to us on a matter that imported so essentially to our dignity and touched us personally so keenly. I begged him to be convinced of our gratitude, and to rely on all the attachment possible to his person for an act of equity long desired and now so complete; adding that in this sincere expression of our sentiments he would find our opinion, which, being parties to the case, it was not permissible for us to give otherwise.


LOUIS AUG. DE BOURBON DUC DU MAINE PRINCE SOU. DE DOMBES ET G.D M.TRE DE L'ARTILL.E DE FR.
Ferit prius quam flamma micet
Gravée par F. Desrochers et se vend chez lui A Paris rüe S.t Jacques au Moecenas

Ce Prince fait la gloire et l'honneur de nôtre âge,
En tous lieux sa Conduite est moderée est Sage
Et depuis que Louis ce maître des humains
A voulu confier son Tonnerre a ses soins
Toujours on voit partir la foudre avant l'orage.

The Duc du Maine

I ended these few words with a deep bow, without rising, and the Duc de La Force did as I did immediately. I then gave all my attention to see whom the regent would ask for votes, intending, if he asked a peer, to interrupt, so as to take from the bastards the faintest pretext to object to forms; but I did not need to do so. The Duc d'Orléans had perfectly understood me, and he skipped to Maréchal d'Estrées, who, with the rest, voted almost without speaking, approving that which most of them did not like at all. I had tried to manage my tone of voice to make it barely sufficient to be heard by all; I even preferred that those at a distance should not hear me to the impropriety of speaking too loud; and I composed my whole person to as much gravity, modesty, and simple gratitude as was possible to me. M. le Duc made me a mischievous sign, with a smile, that I had spoken well; but I kept my gravity and turned to watch the others. It would be impossible to render the expression of their countenances. They were men oppressed by a surprise that overwhelmed them, unable to speak, agitated, some irritated, a few glad like La Force and Guiche, who presently told me so freely.

Speech of regent on reinstating the Comte de Toulouse.

The opinions taken almost as soon as asked, the regent said: "Messieurs, this is passed; justice is done; the rights of the peers secured to them. I have now an act of favour to propose to you; and I do it with the more confidence because I have taken pains to consult the parties interested, who have willingly put their hands to it; so that I am able to present this declaration without offending any one. It concerns the person of the Comte de Toulouse. No one is ignorant how much he has disapproved of all that has been done in their favour, and that he has only supported it since the regency, out of respect for the will of the late king. All the world also knows his virtue, his merit, his industry, his integrity his disinterestedness. Nevertheless, I was not able to avoid including him in the declaration you have just listened to. Justice could make no exception in his favour, and it was necessary to secure positively the rights of the peers. Now that those rights can fear no infringement, I think we may return by favour that which I took from equity, and make a personal exception of the Comte de Toulouse, leaving him in all the honours he has enjoyed, to the exclusion of all others, and without passing those honours to his children should he marry and have them, and without making a precedent for any other person whatever. I have the pleasure to know that the princes of the blood consent to this, and that such of the peers as I have been able to consult not only enter into my feelings, but have even begged me to do this thing. I do not doubt that the esteem he has won here will make this proposition agreeable to you." Then, turning to the Keeper of the Seals, "Monsieur," he continued, "will you be kind enough to read the declaration?" which was done instantly.

Effect; the vote taken.

The declaration read, the regent praised it in a few words and then told the Keeper of the Seals to vote. This he did briefly in praise of the Comte de Toulouse. M. le Duc, after a few praises of the same sort, testified his satisfaction out of esteem and friendship. The Prince de Conti said but two words. After him, I expressed to his Royal Highness my joy at seeing him combine justice and the safety of the rights of the peerage with the unusual favour he did to the virtue of the Comte de Toulouse, who deserved it for his moderation, his truth, and his attachment to the good of the State; I therefore voted with joy for registration of the declaration, saying that I did not fear to add the very humble thanks of the peers, inasmuch as I had the honour to be the senior of those here present. As I closed my lips, I looked round upon them, and easily perceived that my approval did not please, and, probably, my thanks still less. The rest voted, bending their heads to so sharp a blow; a few murmured something, I know not what, between their teeth, but the blow to their cabal was not less felt; and the more reflection succeeded to the first surprise, the more a bitter and angry pain showed itself on their faces in a manner so marked that it was easy to see it was high time to strike.

M. le Duc demands the education of the king.

The opinions given, M. le Duc, casting a brilliant glance on me, was about to speak, when the Keeper of the Seals, not perceiving this, began at the same moment to say something. The regent told him that M. le Duc wished to speak; and immediately, without giving the latter time to do so, he straightened himself with majesty in his chair and said: "Messieurs, M. le Duc has a proposition to make to you; I think it just and reasonable; and I do not doubt that you will judge of it as I do." Then turning to the prince, he said: "Monsieur, will you be good enough to explain it?" The stir that these few words created in that assembly is inexpressible. I seemed to see hunted creatures, pursued on all sides, and surprised by some new enemy rising among them in a refuge which they had reached breathless. "Monsieur," said M. le Duc, addressing the regent, "inasmuch as you have now done justice to the peers, I think I have a right to ask it of you for myself. The late king gave the education of his Majesty to the Duc du Maine. I was then a minor; and, in the opinion of the late king, the Duc du Maine was a prince of the blood and capable of succeeding to the crown.

Since then I have attained my majority, and not only is M. du Maine not a prince of the blood, but he is now reduced to his rank in the peerage. M. le Maréchal de Villeroy is to-day his senior in rank and precedes him everywhere. He cannot, therefore, remain governor of the king under the superintendence of the Duc du Maine. I ask of you this place, which I think ought not to be refused to my age, my quality, and my attachment to the person of the king and to the State. I hope," he added, turning to his left, "that I shall profit by the lessons of M. le Maréchal de Villeroy, to acquit myself well and deserve his friendship."

Agitation of the Council.

As he heard the words "superintendence of the education," Maréchal de Villeroy almost pitched forward; he rested his forehead on his stick, and continued some moments in that posture. It seemed as if he did not hear the remainder of the speech. Villars, Besons, and Effiat bent their shoulders, like men who have received their last blow. I could see no one on my side but the Duc de Guiche, who approved in the midst of his prodigious amazement. Estrées was the first to come to; he shook himself, snorted, and looked at the company like a man returning from the other world.

The regent takes the vote.

As soon as M. le Duc had ended, the regent passed his eyes in review over the whole company, and said that the demand of M. le Duc was just; he did not think it could be refused: that the wrong could not be done to Maréchal de Villeroy of leaving him under the Duc du Maine, inasmuch as he henceforth preceded him: that the superintendence of the king's education could not be more worthily fulfilled than by M. le Duc; and that he felt persuaded the vote would be unanimous. Whereupon he immediately asked the opinion of the Prince de Conti, who gave it in two words; then that of the Keeper of the Seals, which was not long; then mine. I merely said, looking at M. le Duc, that I voted for it with all my heart. All the others, except M. de La Force, who said a word, voted without speaking, simply bowing, the marshals scarcely at all, and d'Effiat the same, his eyes and those of Villars sparkling with fury.

Maréchal de Villeroy complains; the regent launches a thunderbolt.

The votes taken, the regent, turning to M. le Duc, said: "Monsieur, I believe you wish to read what you intend to say to the king at the *lit de justice*." Whereupon M. le Duc read his speech, such as it is now printed. A few moments of deep and gloomy silence succeeded this reading, during which Maréchal de Villeroy, pale and agitated, muttered to himself. At last, like a man who decides on a course, he turned to the regent, with lowered head and ghastly eyes, and said, in a faint voice: "I shall say but two words: all the dispositions of the king are overthrown; I cannot see it without pain; M. du Maine is very unfortunate." "Monsieur," replied the regent, in a sharp but loud tone, "M. du Maine is my brother-in-law; but I prefer an open enemy to a secret one." At that grand saying several of those present lowered their heads. Effiat shook his from side to side. The Maréchal de Villeroy seemed near fainting; sighs began before me and around me, here and there, but furtively; all present felt from this stroke that the scabbard was flung away, and no one knew where the line would be drawn. In order to create a diversion, the Keeper of the Seals proposed to read the speech he had prepared as a preface to the edict for annulling the decrees of parliament, which he intended to deliver before the *lit de justice*. As he finished, some one entered to tell him that he was wanted at the door.

He went out, and returned immediately, not to his place, but to the regent, whom he drew to a window, the minds of all concentrating on them. The regent, returning to his place, informed the Council that he had received word that, the Chambers of parliament being assembled, the president (in spite of what he had said to Des Granges) advised them not to come to the Tuileries, asking them why they should go to a place where they would have no liberty, and proposing that the king should be informed that his parliament would listen to his will in its usual place of session whenever it pleased him to do it the honour of coming or sending there. The Council seemed bewildered by this news; but his Royal Highness said with an easy air that he had expected a refusal, and had ordered the Keeper of the Seals to propose what he thought should be done in case the advice of the president should prevail.

Parliament attempts to refuse to obey the summons.

The Keeper of the Seals declared that he could not believe that parliament would go to the length of such disobedience; if it did, it would be formal and contrary to law and usage. He enlarged a little to show that nothing could be so dangerous as to place the king's authority in a position to be disobeyed; and gave it as his opinion that in case parliament were led into such an error it ought to be immediately suspended. The regent added that there must be no hesitation about that, and took the opinion of M. le Duc, who gave it strongly, the Prince de Conti the same, I the same, and MM. de La Force and de Guiche even more so. The Maréchal de Villeroy, in a broken voice, seeking vainly for grand words which would not come in time, deplored this extremity, and did all he could to avoid giving a precise opinion. Forced at last by the regent to explain himself, he dared not

The regent undisturbed; the vote and steps taken.

oppose, but added that it was with regret, and made an attempt to set forth the evil results. But the regent interrupted him again, said he was not disturbed by that, he was prepared for all; the results would be far worse if the refusal were allowed. Then he asked immediately for the opinion of the Duc de Noailles, who answered shortly, in a deprecating tone, that it would be very sad, but he thought it should be done. Villars wanted to paraphrase, but restrained himself, and said he hoped that parliament would obey. Pressed by the regent, he proposed to wait for further information before voting; but pressed still further, he voted for suspension, with an air of angry vexation, which was extremely marked. No one after that dared to stir, and most of them voted with their heads.

Presently Des Granges returned, and came up to tell the regent that parliament was on the march on foot and was then just debouching from the Palais. This news refreshed the spirits of the Council, especially that of the Duc d'Orléans. Des Granges having retired, with an order to give notice the moment that parliament arrived, the regent told the Keeper of the Seals to be careful, when he proposed the affair of the *légitimés* at the *lit de justice*, that not a moment of suspense should occur as to the position of the Comte de Toulouse, because, as the intention was to reinstate him, not even a momentary stigma should rest upon him. This marked attention, given in such terms, struck another blow at the elder of the two brothers, and I noticed that his partisans seemed still further overwhelmed by it. The regent then reminded the Keeper of the Seals not to fail to make the registrations at the *lit de justice* during the session, and before the eyes of all. The importance of this final consummation, in presence of the king, was very marked.

Parliament arrives at the Tuileries on foot.

At last parliament arrived, and, like children, we went to the windows. They came in their red robes, two and two, through the great gate of the courtyard, which they crossed to enter the Hall of the Ambassadors, where the president, who had come in a carriage with the vice-president Aligre, awaited them. They had come by the little courtyard beyond, in order to have less distance to walk. As soon as parliament was in place, the peers also, and the presidents had taken their furs from behind the screens arranged in the room adjoining, Des Granges returned to notify the regent that all was ready. There had been a discussion as to whether the king should dine while waiting, and I had obtained that he should not do so, for fear that entering the *lit de justice* immediately after eating so much earlier than his usual hour, he might be taken ill, which would be a great annoyance. As soon as Des Granges had announced to the regent that he could start, his Royal Highness told him to notify the parliament to send a deputation to receive the king at the farther end of the guard-room of the Suisse body-guard; and then, turning to the Council, he said aloud that we must now go and fetch the king.

We go to fetch the king.

At these words I felt a trouble of joy at the great spectacle about to take place in my presence, which warned me to redouble my attention to my own conduct. I had notified Villars to walk with us, and Tallard to accompany the marshals of France, and to yield precedence to his seniors, because, on occasions like these, the "ducs vérifiés" do not exist. I tried to supply myself with the strongest dose I could of composure, gravity, and modesty. I followed the Duc d'Orléans, who entered the king's apartment by the little door, and found the king in his cabinet. On the way, the Duc d'Albret and others made me very marked civilities with a great desire to discover something. I paid them in politeness, in complaints of the crowd and the annoyance of my mantle, and so reached the cabinet of the king.

The march to the "lit de justice."

He wore neither mantle nor neck-bands, but was dressed as usual. After the regent had been with him a few moments, he asked if it pleased him to start, and immediately the way was cleared. The few courtiers who were there, for want of finding a place to poke themselves in the audience-chamber, stood aside, and I made a sign to Maréchal de Villars, who slowly started for the door, the Duc de La Force after him, and I behind them, taking care to walk immediately in front of the Prince de Conti; M. le Duc followed the latter, and the regent after him. Behind the regent came the ushers of the king's chamber with their maces, then the king, surrounded by four captains of the body-guard, the Duc d'Albret, grand chamberlain, and Maréchal de Villeroy, his governor. Behind came the Keeper of the Seals, then the Maréchaux d'Estrées, d'Huxelles, de Tallard, and de Besons. These were followed by the chevaliers of the Order, and such of the governors and lieutenant-generals of the provinces as could be notified to attend the king; the latter were to sit below, uncovered, and without votes. This was the order of march from the terrace to the hall of the Suisse guards, at the lower door of which was the deputation sent by parliament to receive the king, with four judges and four counsellors as usual.

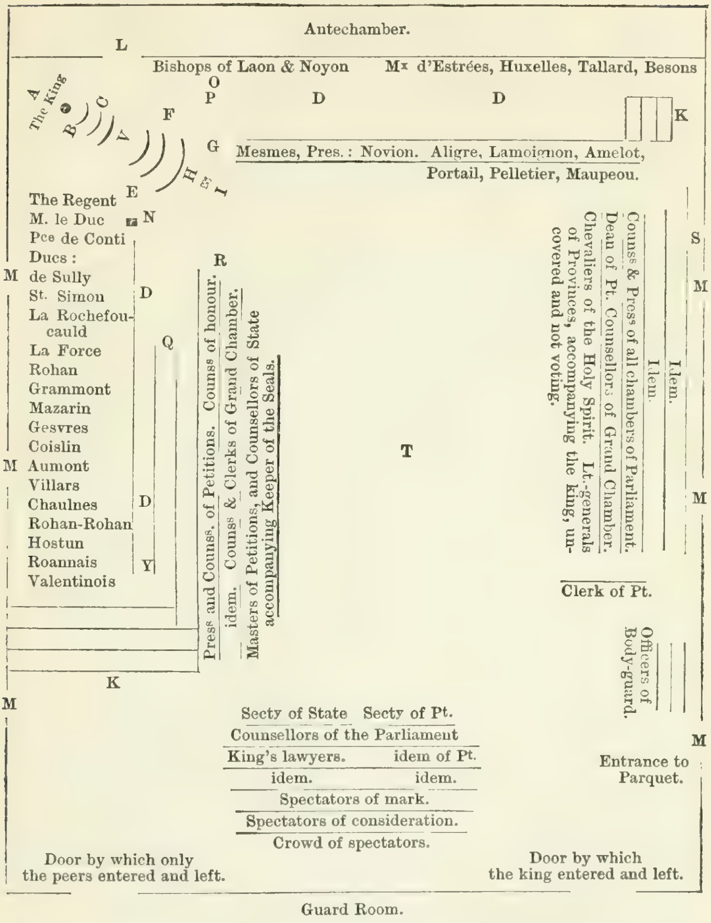
I enter; and confide the reduction of the bastards to certain peers.

While the latter were approaching the king, I said to the Duc de La Force and the Maréchal de Villars that we should do better to go and take our seats and so avoid the confusion at the king's entrance. They followed me accordingly, one by one, in order of precedence, marching in ceremony. There were but we three who could walk in this way, because d'Antin did not come, the Duc de Guiche had vacated his seat, Tallard was not a peer, and the four captains of the guard surrounded the king, bearing the *bâton*, at these great ceremonies.

But before saying more, it is well to give a drawing, showing the arrangement of the *lit de justice*, a glance at which will assist in making clear what follows. I think it will be useless to enter into a more detailed description of the session; this will doubtless suffice to make it understood and to illustrate the local scene about to be recounted. I shall only observe that I have named the peers by the names of their peerages (which is done in taking their votes), and not by the names they bear usually and by which they are known in society.

As parliament was in place, and the king about to arrive, I entered by the same door. The way was partly open; the officers of the body-guard cleared a passage for me and also for the Duc de La Force and Maréchal de Villars, who followed me, the one after the other. I stopped a moment at the entrance of the parquet, overcome with joy at the sight of this great spectacle, and the thought of the precious moments now approaching. I had need to do so, in order to recover myself sufficiently to see clearly all that I wished to observe, and to put on a fresh veneer of gravity and modesty. I was well aware that I should be attentively examined by an Assembly which had been carefully trained not to like me, and by inquisitive spectators convinced that some great secret was about to be revealed in this important assemblage called together so hastily. Moreover, no one could be ignorant that I knew it, if only in the Council of Regency, from which I came.

I was not mistaken. The moment that I appeared all eyes


Antechamber.
L
Bishops of Laon & Noyon
Mx d'Estrées, Huxelles, Tallard, Besons
O
P
D
D
K
The King
A
B
C
V
F
E
H
G
I
Mesmes, Pres.: Novion. Aligre, Lamoignon, Amelot, Portail, Pelletier, Maupeou.
The Regent
M. le Duc
N
Pce de Conti
Ducs:
M
de Sully
St. Simon
D
La Rochefoucauld
La Force
Q
Rohan
Grammont
Mazarin
Gesvres
Coislin
M
Aumont
Villars
Chaulnes
D
Rohan-Rohan
Hostun
Roannais
Y
Valentinois
R
Press and Counss. of Petitions. Counss of honour.
idem. Counss & Clerks of Grand Chamber.
Masters of Petitions, and Counsellors of State accompanying Keeper of the Seals.
K
M
T
Counss & Pres of all chambers of Parliament.
Dean of Pt. Counsellors of Grand Chamber.
Chevaliers of the Holy Spirit. Lt.-generals of Provinces, accompanying the king, uncovered and not voting.
Idem.
Idem.
S
M
M
Clerk of Pt.
Officers of Body-guard.
M
Secty of State
Secty of Pt.
Counsellors of the Parliament
King's lawyers.
idem of Pt.
idem.
idem.
Spectators of mark.
Spectators of consideration.
Crowd of spectators.
Entrance to Parquet.
Door by which only the peers entered and left.
Door by which the king entered and left.
Guard Room.

A. The king on his throne.
B. Steps of the throne.
C. Grand chamberlain seated on hassock, covered and voting.
D. Raised seats to right and left.
E. King's short stairway.
F. Provost of Paris, with his baton, seated on stairs.
G. Ushers of the king's chamber on their knees.
H. Keeper of the Seals in his chair with arms and no back.
I. Small desk before him.
K. Steps to reach high seats.
L. Doorway, from which the Bishops of Troyes and Fréjus, and M. de Torcy viewed the scene.
M. Windows, with scaffoldings for spectators.
N. Maréchal de Villeroy, on a stool, covered and voting.
O. Duc de Villeroy, captain of the guard, seated, covered and voting.
P. Beringhen, first equerry, uncovered, not voting.
Q. Heralds at arms.
R. Grand master of ceremonies seated, but not covered and not voting.
S. Passage from the high seats for the bishops, bishop-peers, and marshals.
T. The parquet or open space.
V. Passage on a level with the high seats.
Y. Folded seat in case of need for lay peers.

were turned upon me. I advanced slowly towards the table of the chief-clerk of the parliament; there I turned between the two benches and crossed the whole width of the hall, passing in front of the king's law officers, who bowed to me, smiling, and then I mounted the three steps to the raised seats, where all the peers whose names I have marked down were in their places, but rising as soon as I approached the steps; I bowed to them respectfully from the top of the third step. Advancing slowly I took La Feuillade [Roannais] by the shoulder, although I had no intimacy with him, and I told him to listen attentively and take good care to show no signs of life; for he was about to hear a declaration regarding parliament, and after that two others; adding that we were now approaching the happiest and most unlooked-for moment, when the bastards would be reduced to their rank of precedence in the peerage, the Comte de Toulouse alone being reinstated, but not his children if he had them. La Feuillade was a moment without understanding me, and then so filled with joy he could not speak. He pressed against me, and as I left him he said, "But how — the Comte de Toulouse?" "You will see," I said, and passed on. As I passed the Duc d'Aumont I remembered the fine rendezvous he had made with the Duc d'Orléans for the next day to reconcile him to the parliament; and I could not resist looking fixedly at him with a mocking smile. I stopped between M. de Metz [Coislin] and the Duc de Tresmes [Gesvres] to whom I said the same. The first sniffed, the second was enchanted, and made me repeat it to his joy and surprise. I said as much to the Duc de Louvigny [Grammont], who was not so much surprised as the others, but equally transported with joy. At last I reached my place between the Ducs de Sully and de La Rochefoucauld. I bowed to them, and we all sat down at once. I gave one glance to the scene, and then I drew the heads of my two neighbours to mine and told them the same thing. Sully was deeply touched; the other asked me harshly why the Comte de Toulouse was excepted. I had several reasons in reserve to give him, but I contented myself with answering that I knew nothing about that; and as to the fact itself I tried to make him like it. But he had never forgiven the Comte de Toulouse for taking his place as Master of the Hunt. His coldness was such that I could not refrain from asking him the cause, and reminding him of the ardour with which he had pressed our petition against the bastards, the consequences of which, so far beyond our hopes, he was now to see enregistered. He replied as he could, still gloomy and cold; after which I did not take the trouble to speak to him again.

The spectacle of the "lit de justice."

Seated in my place in an elevated position, no one being before me, because the bench for those peers who could find no room on ours did not reach farther than in front of the Duc de La Force, I was able to observe all present. This I did to the fullest extent and with all the keenness of my eyes. One thing alone constrained me; this was that I dared not fix my eyes as long as I wished on certain persons; I feared the fire and the vivid signification of my glances; and the more I encountered those of others turned upon me, the more I felt warned to balk their curiosity by my reserve. But I did cast a glittering eye at the president of the parliament and along the "grand bench," in relation to which I was finely seated. I cast it over all the parliament, and I saw an amazement, a silence, a consternation for which I was not prepared, and which seemed to me of good augury. The president insolently depressed, the vice-presidents disconcerted, anxiously attentive to what was happening, furnished me with a most agreeable sight. Those who were simply curious, among whom I class all those who had no vote, seemed to be not less surprised than the others, but without their trouble of mind, calmly surprised in fact. All were conscious of some great expectation, and were seeking to forestall knowledge by divining the faces of those who came from the Council.

Entrance of the king; majestic bearing of the regent.

But I had little time for this examination. The king arrived. The bustle of this entrance lasted until his Majesty and all who accompanied him had taken their places, and presented another species of singularity. Every one tried to penetrate the mind of the regent, the Keeper of the Seals, and the other great personages. The departure of the bastards from the Council-chamber redoubled attention, and those who did not already know of it now perceived their absence. The consternation of the marshals, and of their senior, alone in his place as governor to the king, was evident. It increased the dismay of the president, who, not seeing his master the Duc du Maine, cast a withering glance on the Duc de Sully and on me, who occupied the places the two brothers would have filled. In an instant the eyes of the whole assembly fastened upon us; and I remarked that the air of concentration and expectancy of something extraordinary was doubled on all faces. The regent wore an air of quiet majesty and determination, which was quite new to him; his eyes were attentive, his bearing grave, but easy. M. le Duc was discreet, cautious, though environed with an indescribable air of brilliancy that shone from his whole person, and which one felt to be restrained. The Prince de Conti seemed sad, pensive, wandering perhaps in distant spaces. I could scarcely see them during the session, unless under pretext of looking at the king, who was serious, majestic, and at the same time as pretty as possible, — grave but graceful in all his behaviour, attentive in manner and not at all bored, maintaining his dignity well, and without embarrassment.

The bearing of the Keeper of the Seals.

When all were placed and reseated, the Keeper of the Seals remained a few moments motionless, looking around him, and the fire of the spirit that issued from his eyes seemed to enter the breasts of all before him. Profound silence eloquently announced the fear, attention, trouble, and curiosity of those various expectancies. When the Keeper of the Seals had, after the manner of great preachers, accustomed himself to the sight of this august audience, he uncovered his head, rose, advanced to the king, and knelt upon the steps of the throne about the middle of the same step on which the grand chamberlain was seated on a cushion. There he took the orders of the king, rose, descended, seated himself again upon his chair, and replaced his hat. I will say, once for all, that he performed the same ceremony at the beginning of each declaration and also before and after taking the votes on each of them.

He opens the great scene with a speech to parliament on its duties.

After a silence of a few moments he opened this great scene by a speech. The report of this *lit de justice* made and printed by parliament dispenses me from the necessity of reporting here the speeches of the Keeper of the Seals, the president of parliament, the king's lawyers, and the various documents read and enregistered. This first speech, the reading of formal papers, the order to open and keep open the two double doors, surprised no one; they only served as a preface to the rest and whetted the curiosity more and more as the moment approached to satisfy it.

Consternation; envenomed speech of the president.

This first act over, the second, that of annulling the decree of parliament, was announced by the speech of the Keeper of the Seals, the force of which penetrated the minds of the parliament. General consternation overspread their faces. Scarcely any of the members dared to speak to his neighbour. I remarked that the Abbé Pucelle, who, being a counsellor-clerk, was on the benches opposite to me, stood up when the Keeper of the Seals was speaking, to hear him better. Bitter pain, that was plainly full of spite, darkened the face of the president; shame and confusion was also upon it. What the jargon of the Palais calls the "grand bench" lowered its head all at once as if at a signal; and these proud magistrates, whose arrogant "remonstrances" did not yet satisfy their pride and their ambition, struck down by a punishment so great and so public, found themselves brought back to their true position with ignominy, and without being pitied by any except their own paltry cabal.

After the vote was taken, and while the Keeper of the Seals was announcing it, I saw this "grand bench" rousing itself. The president wished to speak; and he made the remonstrance which is printed, full of the most refined malignity and impudence towards the regent, and insolence towards the king. But the scoundrel trembled as he uttered it. His broken voice, the constraint of his eyes, the shock and trouble visible in his whole person counteracted this last drop of venom, the libation of which he could not deny to himself and his Assembly. It was then that I tasted, with delight that can never be expressed, the spectacle of those proud civilians, who dared to refuse to bow to us, prostrate on their knees, rendering at our feet their homage to the throne; while we, seated and covered in our high places beside that throne, were, veritably and effectively, *laterales Regis* against this *vas electum* of the *tiers-état.* My eyes, fixed, glued on those arrogant bourgeois, ran over that whole grand bench on its knees or standing, the ample folds of its fur robes undulating at each genuflection, prolonged and redoubled, and not ending until by command of the king given by the mouth of the Keeper of the Seals. The president's remonstrance over, the Keeper of the Seals mounted to the king; then, without taking any vote, he returned to his place, cast his eyes on the president, and said, "*The king chooses to be obeyed, and obeyed upon the spot.*" That great saying fell like a thunderbolt, striking down the presidents and counsellors in a visible manner. They all bowed their heads, and most of them were long before they raised them. The rest of the spectators, except the marshals of France, seemed little affected by their disconsolate condition.

Reduction of the bastards to their rank in the peerage.

After an interval of a few moments succeeding the pronunciation upon the parliament, the Keeper of the Seals again mounted to the king, and returning to his place again remained silent for a while. Then all present perceived that, the affair of the parliament being over, still another was to come. Each man, in suspense, endeavoured to foresee it by thought. Some, warned by their eyes of the absence of the bastards, judged rightly that something was to happen concerning them; but no one guessed what, and much less the extent of it.

At last the Keeper of the Seals opened his lips, and, with his first words, he announced the fall of one brother and the preservation of the other. The effect of this on all faces is not to be expressed. However occupied I might be in controlling mine, I did not lose a single thing. Astonishment prevailed over all the other passions. Many seemed glad, either from equity or from hatred to the Duc du Maine or affection for the Comte de Toulouse; others showed consternation. The president lost all countenance; his face, so consequential and audacious, was seized with a convulsive twitching; the excess of his rage alone kept him from swooning. This was much worse to him than the reading of the declaration about the parliament. Each word was legislative and carried with it a fall. The attention was general, holding each person motionless so as not to lose a word; all eyes were on the clerk who was reading. Towards the middle of the lecture, the president, apparently grinding his remaining teeth, dropped his forehead on his stick, which he held by both hands, and, in this singular and very marked posture, he listened to the rest of the reading, so crushing to him, so resurrecting to us.

I, meantime, was fainting with joy. I even feared I might give way; my heart, dilated to excess, could find no space to expand in. The violence that I did to myself in order to let nothing escape me was great, and yet this torture was delicious. I compared the years of our servitude, the melancholy days when, dragged into parliament as victims, we had many a time swelled the triumph of the bastards; I recalled the divers degrees by which they had mounted to their zenith on our heads; I compared these things, I say, with this day of law and justice, with this awful fall which was also the lever that once more raised us. I thanked myself that it had been through me it was effected. I considered the radiant splendour of this hour in presence of the king and that august assembly. I triumphed; I was avenged; I swam in my vengeance; I rejoiced in the full accomplishment of the most vehement and continued desire of my whole life. I was tempted to feel that I would never care for anything again. All the while, however, I never ceased to listen to that vivifying reading, — every word of which resounded on my heart like the bow upon an instrument,—examining at the same time the different impressions that it made on all present.

At the first word which the Keeper of the Seals said of this affair the eyes of the two bishop-peers met mine. Never did I see surprise to equal theirs, nor a transport of joy so marked. I had not been able to prepare them, on account of the distance between our seats, and they seemed unable to check the emotion that seized them suddenly. I swallowed by my eyes one delicious draught of their joy, and then I turned away my head, fearing to succumb to this excess of mine, not daring to look at them again.

That reading ended, the other declaration, in favour of the Comte de Toulouse, was begun immediately. It seemed to complete the despair of the president and the friends of the Duc du Maine by the contrast between the two brothers. The friends of the Comte de Toulouse rejoiced; indifferent persons were very glad of his exception, but they thought it without grounds, and without legality. I remarked very divers movements, and more ease in speaking to one another during this reading; to which, nevertheless, all present were attentive.

I decline in a marked manner to vote.

The Keeper of the Seals mounted as before to the king and then took the votes, beginning with the princes of the blood, after which he came to the Duc de Sully and to me. Happily I had a better memory than he, or perhaps than he chose to have; besides, it was my affair. I held towards him my hat with its bunch of plumes in front in a very marked manner, saying in a loud tone: "No, monsieur, we cannot be judges; we are parties to this affair, and we can only render thanks to the king for the justice he is kind enough to do us." He smiled and made me an excuse. I pushed him off before the Duc de

Sully had time to open his mouth; and looking about me I saw with pleasure that every one had noticed this refusal to vote. The Keeper of the Seals now turned short round upon his steps, and without asking the votes of any of the peers, or of the two bishop-peers, he went to the marshals of France; then he descended to the president and judges, and so to the lower seats; after which he remounted to the king, returned to his place, pronounced the order for registration, and so put the final crown to my joy.

Speech of M. le Duc demanding the education of the king.

Immediately after this M. le Duc rose, and bowing low to the king he forgot to sit down again and put on his hat to speak, which is the right and usage of the peers of France; accordingly not one of us rose. He therefore delivered uncovered and standing the speech which is printed at the end of the other proceedings; he read it rather unintelligibly, because his voice was not favourable. As soon as he had finished, the Duc d'Orléans rose, and committed the same blunder. He said, standing with his head uncovered, that the demand of M. le Duc seemed to him just; and after a few laudations of him, added that as M. du Maine was now reduced to his place in the seniority of the peerage, M. le Maréchal de Villeroy could no longer remain under him, which was a new and strong reason, besides those that M. le Duc had adduced. This demand had brought the amazement of the assembly to the highest pitch, and the president and the few persons who by their disconcerted looks seemed interested in the Duc du Maine, to despair. The Maréchal de Villeroy, without moving a muscle, looked furious, and the eyes of M. le Grand filled with tears. I could not well distinguish the behaviour of his cousin and intimate friend, the Maréchal d'Huxelles, who sheltered himself under the huge brim of his hat pulled down over his eyes, but the hat never quivered. The president, crushed by this last thunderbolt, lost countenance altogether, and I thought for a moment that his chin would drop down upon his knees.

He obtains his demand.

Presently, the Keeper of the Seals, having told the king's law officers to speak, they answered that they had not heard the proposal of M. le Duc; whereupon, the paper was passed down to them from hand to hand, during which time the Keeper of the Seals repeated in loud tones what the regent had added about the seniority of rank in the peerage of the Maréchal de Villeroy over the Duc du Maine. The *avocat-général* merely cast his eyes upon the paper of M. le Duc, and made his speech; after which the Keeper of the Seals went to take the votes. I gave mine quite loud, saying, "For this affair, monsieur, I vote very willingly to give the superintendence of the king's education to M. le Duc."

Registration of all the decrees by the "lit de justice."

The result announced, the Keeper of the Seals called upon the clerk of the parliament to bring his papers and his little desk close to his own, and make immediately, in presence of the king, all the registrations of what had now been read and decreed, and to sign and seal them. This was done without any difficulty, under the eyes of the Keeper of the Seals, who never lifted them from the process; but as there were five or six decrees to enregister, it took a long time to do so.

The king's behaviour; his indifference about M. du Maine.

I had closely observed the king when the question of his education came up, and I did not remark in him any sort of emotion, or change, not even constraint. It was the last act of the spectacle, and he was still quite fresh while the registrations were being written. During that time, as there were no more speeches to occupy his attention, he began to laugh with those who were nearest to him, and to amuse himself with what he saw, even to remarking that the Duc de Louvigny, though at quite a distance from the throne, wore a velvet coat, and he joked about the heat he must be in; but all this gracefully. This indifference to M. du Maine struck every one, and publicly contradicted what the partisans of the latter endeavoured to spread about; namely, that the king's eyes had reddened, though neither at the *lit de justice* nor afterwards had he dared to show his feelings. The truth was, his eyes were dry and serene, and he never uttered the name of the Duc du Maine but once afterwards, and that was on the evening of the same day, when he asked where he was going, with a very indifferent air, without saying more either then, or later, or even naming his children. The latter had seldom taken the trouble to go and see the king; and when they did go it was only to hold their own little court apart in his presence and amuse themselves together.

While the registration was going on, I turned my eyes gently on all sides of me, and though I steadily controlled them, I could not resist the temptation to compensate myself for the past on the president; I crushed him with a hundred glances prolonged and vehement. Insult, contempt, disdain, triumph, darted from my eyes to the marrow of his bones; often he lowered his own glance when he caught mine; once or twice he fixed his eyes upon me, and I gratified myself by spurning him with stealthy but vindictive smiles, which utterly confounded him. I bathed myself in his rage, I took delight in making him feel it; I joked about him sometimes with my two neighbours, making them, with a wink, look at him when I knew that he would see it; in a word, I gave myself free rein upon him as much as I possibly could.

The registrations being at last completed, the king descended from the throne to the lower seats by his little steps, and passed behind the chair of the Keeper of the Seals, The "lit de justice" ends.

followed by the regent, the two princes of the blood, and the necessary seigneurs of his suite. At the same moment the marshals of France descended by the end steps from their raised seats, and while the king crossed the parquet accompanied by the deputation which had received him, they passed between the benches of the counsellors, directly opposite to us, and put themselves in the suite of the king at the door of the hall, by which the king went out as he had come. At the same time the two bishop-peers, passing before the throne, came to put themselves at our head, in front of me, all of us keenly rejoicing. We followed them, two and two, along our benches, in order of precedence, descending the three steps at the end and continuing straight to the door in front of us, through which we issued. The parliament then began its march, and issued by the other door, which was the one through which we had entered, and by which the king had entered and issued. Way was made for us to the steps. The crowd, the company, the spectacle restrained our talk and our joy. I was choking with it. I entered my carriage at once, for it was there at hand, and it got me very easily out of the court-yard, so that I had no detention, and from the session to my own house took me less than a quarter of an hour.

VIII.

The regent forces me to tell the Duchesse d'Orléans of the fall of her brothers.

ENTERING my own house about half-past two o'clock, I found at the foot of the staircase Humières, Louville, and all my family, including my mother, curiosity having dragged her from her room, which she had not left since the beginning of the winter. We remained down stairs in my apartment, where, while changing my suit and shirt, I was answering their eager questions, when M. de Biron was announced, he having forced an entrance, which I had forbidden in order to rest a little in freedom. Biron put his head into my cabinet and begged to be allowed to say a word to me. I went, half-dressed, into my chamber with him. He told me the Duc d'Orléans had expected me to go straight to the Palais-Royal from the Tuileries, as I had promised him. I asked Biron if he knew what the regent wanted me for. He replied it was to go to Saint-Cloud and inform the Duchesse d'Orléans from him of what had taken place. This was to me a thunderbolt. Biron agreed with me as to the painfulness of such an errand, but exhorted me to go at once to the Palais-Royal, where I was impatiently awaited. I returned to my cabinet so changed that Mme. de Saint-Simon cried out, supposing that some alarming thing had happened. I told them what I had just heard, and after Biron had talked with them a moment and exhorted me to lose no time in obeying, he went off to dinner. Ours was just served. I waited a while to recover from my first agitation, then I concluded not to annoy the Duc d'Orléans by my slowness if he was absolutely determined on this matter, at the same time to do my best to avoid an errand so hard and painful. I therefore swallowed some soup and an egg, and went off to the Palais-Royal.

There the Duc d'Orléans told me he knew the pain it would be to me to announce to the Duchesse d'Orléans an event so distressing to her in her way of thinking, but he must own that he could not write it to her; they were not on terms of tenderness; that she would keep and show his letter; that I had always been the make-peace between them, and this, joined to my friendship for each of them, made him beg me, for love of both, to undertake this commission. I answered, after the proper compliments and respects, that of all men in the world I was the one least suitable for this errand; that I was known to be extremely sensitive about the rights of my rank; that the rank of the bastards had always been intolerable to me; that I had never ceased to ardently desire what had now happened; that I had said so a hundred times to the Duchesse d'Orléans and once to the Duc du Maine; and for me to go and announce to her this news, which put me at the summit of joy, was not only a want of respect but would be insulting to her, to whom it would cause the deepest grief. "You are wrong," replied the Duc d'Orléans; "that is not reasoning. It is just because you have always spoken so frankly about the bastards to Mme. d'Orléans, and have always behaved head up in this matter, that I ask you to go. Don't refuse me this mark of friendship; I know perfectly well how distasteful the errand is; but in such an important matter you ought not to refuse a friend." I protested, I contested; great verbiage on both sides, — in short, no way of getting out of it; in vain I said it would embroil me with her forever, that the world would think it very strange I took such an embassy; no ears for all that, but such redoubled eagerness that I had to yield.

I break the news to the Duchesse d'Orléans.

When I reached Saint-Cloud they told me the Duchesse d'Orléans was at vespers. I waited in the apartment of the Maréchale de Rochefort, which opens on the vestibule to the chapel. A moment later they came to tell me that the Duchesse d'Orléans, hearing of my arrival, had returned to her apartment; and presently the Maréchale de Rochefort arrived, limping along on her stick, and sent by the Duchesse d'Orléans to bring me to her. On entering the bedroom the maréchale left me. I was told that her Royal Highness was in the marble salon that adjoins it, though lower by three steps. I turned and saw her, and then bowed with an air that was wholly different from my usual manner. At first she did not perceive the change, and called to me to come down to her, in a gay and natural manner; then, observing that I stopped at the foot of the steps, she cried out, "Good God, monsieur! how you look! What news do you bring me?" Seeing that I did not move or answer, she asked again. I slowly made a few steps forward, and then, after her third question, I said, "Madame, have you heard nothing?" "No, monsieur; I only know there has been a *lit de justice*, but nothing of what happened there." "Ah! madame," I said, "then I am more unfortunate than I thought." "What is it, monsieur?" she asked; "tell me quickly what has happened." So saying, she sat up on the sofa on which she had been lying. "Come here; sit down," she added. I approached and told her I was in despair. She, more and more agitated, said, "Speak, speak! it is better to hear bad news from friends than from others." Those words wrung my heart and made me feel the pain I was going to give. I went up to her and told her that the regent had reduced M. le Duc du Maine to his rank of seniority in the peerage, reinstating the Comte de Toulouse in all the honours he enjoyed. Here I paused for a moment; then I added that he had given the superintendence of the king's education to M. le Duc.

Her tears began to flow in abundance. She did not answer, did not cry out, but wept bitterly. She pointed to a seat, and I sat down, — my eyes fixed on the ground for some time. Then I told her that M. le Duc d'Orléans, who had forced upon me rather than given me so sad an errand, had expressly ordered me to say to her that he had very strong proofs in hand against M. du Maine; that his consideration for her had long withheld him, but that now it had been impossible to delay any longer. She replied gently that her brother was very unfortunate; and soon after she asked me if I knew his crime, and of what nature it was. I told her that the regent had never spoken of it to me, and that I had not ventured to question him, seeing that he said no more. A moment later I expressed my own grief in knowing hers, the repugnance I felt at this painful errand, and the resistance I had made to it; to all of which she replied by signs and a few kind words broken by sobs. She asked me if I knew what the Duc d'Orléans wished her to do about her brothers; adding that she would not see them if he did not wish it. I replied that the fact of his giving me no orders on that point was a proof he would think well of her seeing them; that as for the Comte de Toulouse there could be no difficulty; and for the Duc du Maine I saw none either, and would answer for it if need were. She spoke of the latter, saying that he must have been very criminal; that she was reduced to wish he were. Here a fresh flow of tears interrupted her words.

I sat still on my chair for a time, not venturing to raise my eyes, in a most painful uncertainty as to whether I ought to go or stay. At last I told her of my embarrassment, saying that I thought perhaps she might like to be alone for a while before giving me her orders. After a short silence she said she wished for her women. I rose and sent them to her, telling them where to find me if her Royal Highness desired to see me again. After a time the Maréchale de Rochefort came to say that she wished to speak to me. I found her on the same sofa where I had left her, a writing-desk on her knees and a pen in her hand. As soon as she saw me she said she was going to Montmartre, and was writing to the Duc d'Orléans to ask his permission; and she read me her letter, which was begun by six or seven lines in a large handwriting on a small sheet of paper; then, looking at me with an air of gentleness and friendship, she said: "The tears blind me; I have sent for you to do me a kindness; my hand shakes; will you write it for me?" so saying she held out the writing-case with the paper upon it. I took it, and she dictated the rest. I was struck with the greatest astonishment at a letter so concise, so expressive, with sentiments so becoming, in words so well chosen; and all in an order and precision that the most tranquil reflection could scarcely have produced in the best of writers, and issuing spontaneously amid violent distress, sudden agitation, the tumult of many passions broken by sobs and torrents of tears. I shall always regret that I could not copy it. It was so dignified, so just, so restrained, that it was equally loyal to truth and to duty, — a letter so perfectly beautiful that, although I remember in the main what was in it, I dare not write it down for fear of degrading it. What a sad pity that so much sense, intelligence,

She dictates to me a singularly noble letter.

right-mindedness in a spirit so capable of controlling itself in moments usually uncontrollable, should be spent on this mania of bastardy, which ruined and devastated everything. The letter written, I read it to her. She would not close it, and asked me to give it back to her.

Conduct of the Comte de Toulouse.

The Duc du Maine and the Comte de Toulouse, on leaving the Council chamber, went down to the apartment of the Duc du Maine, where they shut themselves up with their most confidential friends. They chose them well, for no one ever knew what passed. The Comte de Toulouse did not leave to go to his own house till five o'clock, when he seemed inclined to follow the fortunes of his brother; but d'O, who had retained over his mind, as he had over his household, the sort of control of a former governor, dissuaded him, — not that d'O was unfriendly to the Duc du Maine, but he was more attached to his own interests, and those were certainly not to allow his master to annihilate himself by going into exile in the country. We heard afterwards that the frankness with which the Chevalier d'Hautefort, his equerry, and lieutenant-general of the navy, spoke to him, determined the Comte de Toulouse to take the wiser course. He thought of himself alone at Rambouillet, out of all condition or power to undertake anything; in danger of a degradation like that of his brother for refusing to accept the declaration in his favour; dependent on the fortunes and caprices of a crazy woman whom he abhorred and a brother whom he neither loved nor respected. The consequences made him tremble, and he determined to keep his rank and his present position. The next day but one, Sunday, he held the council of the navy as usual and came in the afternoon to the Council of Regency with a cold, reserved, and serious manner. Some persons were surprised and sorry to see him there. Few approached him, and shortly after his arrival we took our places. As soon as I was seated I whispered to him that I should only venture to say one word, which I could not help saying namely: that this was the first time I had ever seated myself below him with pleasure. His thanks were of his nature, cold. I did not speak to him again during this Council. His coldness lasted some time. I think he thought it was decorous, and I did not try to warm him; but little by little we returned to our old relations; and I heard afterwards from the Duchesse Sforza that he blamed the Duchesse d'Orléans very much for her hard feelings towards me and for refusing to see me; and had even made her cry about it more than once.

Clandestine use of secret registers by parliament.

The parliament returned from the *lit de justice* on foot, with very little satisfaction from the people in the streets, none of whom followed them, or from the shops, from which they heard remarks very different from those they expected. When they reached their own Chamber they breathed freer from the fear and shame they had endured, and tried to avenge themselves, clandestinely, by causing to be entered on a fly-sheet of a secret register that they had not been able or permitted to vote at the *lit de justice,* and they therefore protested against all that was done there.

Thus ended this great affair, so important to the peace of the State, by consolidating the royal authority in the hands of the regent, and preventing a division of it which would soon have left him a vain and empty show of power; a complicated affair, the success of which was due equally to diligence and to secrecy, to want of preparation in the cabal already formed, and to the weakness of its principal leaders. The honour that this action won for the regent in foreign nations is inconceivable. They began to recover from the fear of not being able to treat securely with a prince who allowed his power to be wrested from him by legists; this is how the King of Sicily expressed himself freely in so many words at Turin; and the other powers made it as distinctly understood.

M. le Duc takes charge of the education of the king.

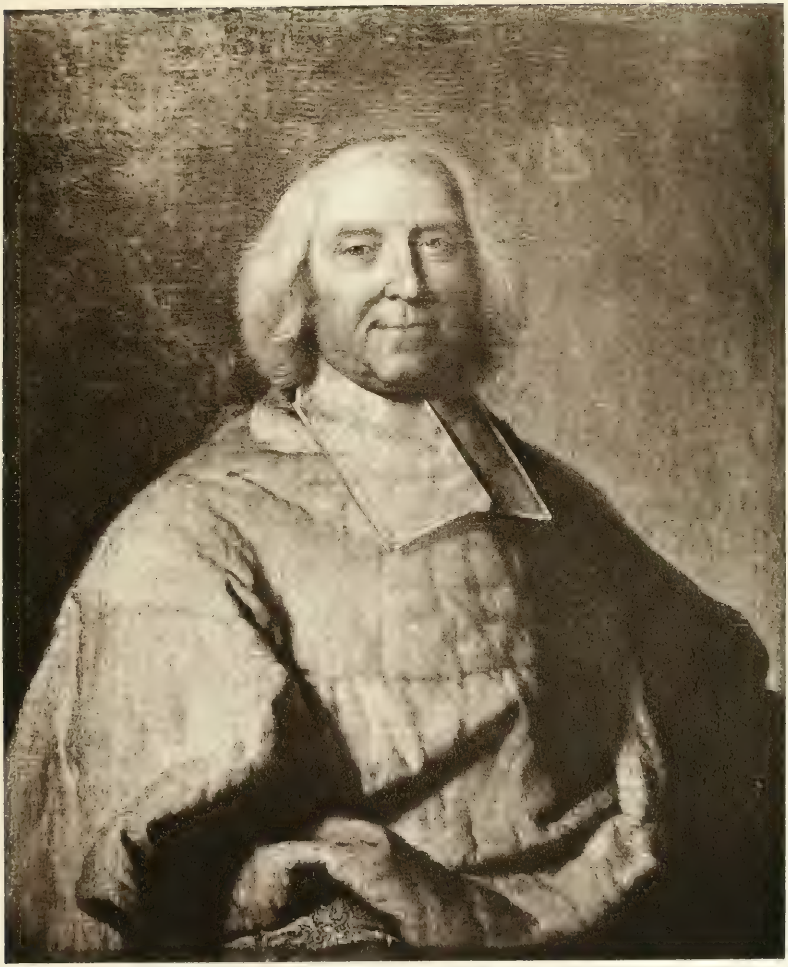
The day after the *lit de justice* M. le Duc assumed possession of the education of the king and began his functions. He established himself a few days later in the apartment occupied by the Duc du Maine at the Tuileries. On the afternoon of the day of the *lit de justice* Maréchal de Villeroy, accompanied by M. de Fréjus and the rest of the education, went ostentatiously, though inwardly raging, to the hôtel de Condé, where the supple respects on one side, and the false compliments on the other made quite a spectacle. The next day the king went to drive in the Cours, and M. le Duc accompanied him in place of the Duc du Maine, thus making public his function.

My relations with Fleury, Bishop of Fréjus.

It is well known that Mme. de Lévi had a great deal to do with making M. de Fréjus the king's preceptor. She was a woman of much mind, lively to excess, always ardent, seeing persons and things only through passion; she was possessed about M. de Fréjus to folly, if the truth be told, but also in all propriety and honour; for this woman, with her transports of affection and the reverse, was deeply imbued with virtue, honour, religion, and decorum. She was the daughter of the Duc de Chevreuse and therefore intimately my friend, and always in the closest union with Mme. de Saint-Simon. Talking with us one evening, she began upon the subject of M. de Fréjus and blamed me for not liking him. I showed my surprise, for I really had no reason to like or dislike him. That did not satisfy her, and she returned to the charge again and again. I concluded therefore that this was done by agreement with M. de Fréjus, who, looking afar, desired to smooth his way. I always answered civilly about him, for I had no reason to do otherwise; so that finally he addressed me one day in the king's cabinet, and soon after came to my house and asked himself to dinner. After that he came quite often, frequently to dinner, and I used sometimes to go and see him in the evenings. He was always a good talker and good company, and had passed his life in choice society. Many subjects therefore came up in our conversations.

I propose to him an easy, novel, agreeable, and useful form of instruction for the king.

One evening when I was with him, soon after he began his functions as preceptor, they brought him a package. As it was late, and he was in his dressing-gown and night-cap at the corner of his fire, I made as if to go away and let him open his packet. He prevented me, and said it was only some themes of the king which he made the Jesuits correct, and they had sent them back. He had good reason to use this help, for he himself knew nothing but the great world, *ruelle*, and gallantry. Apropos of the king's themes I asked him, as if not approving it, whether he intended to put much Latin into his head. He said no, only enough to keep him from being entirely ignorant of it; and we soon agreed that history, especially that of France, general and special, was what he ought to study most. Thereupon a thought came into my head, which I imparted to him at once, of a means whereby to teach the king a thousand very instructive and special things that would be useful to him all his life, and yet amusing, things which he could scarcely learn in any other way. I told him that Gaignières, a learned and judicious virtuoso, had spent his life in all sorts



Cardinal Fleury

of historical researches, and had, with much trouble and expensive journeys, collected a great number of portraits of men and women of all kinds who had figured in France, especially at Court, in public affairs, and in the army, from the time of Louis XI.; and in the same way, but in less quantity, those of foreign nations. I said I had often seen these portraits, though only in part, because he had no room to hang them, although he had lived in a vast house, opposite the Incurables; and that Gaignières before his death had given this vast accumulation to the king.[1]

Now the cabinet of the king at the Tuileries had a door which opened into a very long and handsome gallery which was entirely bare. This door had been walled up; and a few plank partitions had been put in the gallery to accommodate the valets of the Maréchal de Villeroy; and I proposed to M. de Fréjus to hire rooms for the latter elsewhere, open the door of communication with the king, cover the walls with Gaignières' portraits (which were probably rotting in some storage room), and tell the preceptors of the little boys who came to pay their court to the king to teach their pupils to know these personages from histories and memoirs, so that they could talk about them while following the king in this gallery, while he, M. de Fréjus, could tell the king about them fundamentally; in this way the king would get a sketch of consecutive history into his mind, and a thousand anecdotes very useful to a king which he could not obtain elsewhere. I said he would be struck in the first place with the singularity of the figures and clothes, and this would help him to remember the facts and dates of these personages; that neither Christianity nor policy forbade his knowing about the birth, fortunes, actions, and behaviour of persons dead themselves and all who belonged to them; and in that way, little by little, the king would learn what were good services and ill services, how fortunes are made and ruined, the rascalities, the scoundrelisms, the arts and shifts by which persons gain their ends, deceive, govern, and muzzle kings, set up cabals and minions, thrust out merit, mind, capacity, virtue, — in a word, the manœuvres of Courts, of which the lives of these personages furnished examples of all kinds. I advised him to bring this amusement down to the time of Henri IV.; for it would put historically into the head of the king most important things without his perceiving the instruction, which would remain, perhaps to the end of his life, one of the most useful he ever received; for the portraits would always remind him of it and give him great facility for more serious and connected study; and all this while running about and amusing himself. M. de Fréjus expressed himself as charmed with the idea and extremely glad of it. But he did nothing, and henceforth I saw what would come of the education of the king, and said no more to M. de Fréjus of either the portraits or the gallery, where the valets of Maréchal de Villeroy were left in peace.

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[1] The Bibliothèque Nationale still possesses a part of the portraits and manuscripts collected by Gaignières. Much curious information can be found there on the ancient institutions of France. (Note by the French editor.)

Cellamare's plot against the regent.

Cellamare, the Spanish ambassador, a man of much sense and ability, had busied himself for a long time in secretly stirring up strifes. His object was nothing less than to bring the whole kingdom to rebel against the government of the Duc d'Orléans, and, without seeing clearly what could be done with the regent, to put the King of Spain at the head of affairs in France, with a Council and ministers appointed by him, and a lieutenant under him, who should be in fact regent, and was no other than the Duc du Maine. These plotters reckoned on the parliaments of Paris and the provinces, on the leaders and promoters of the Unigenitus, on the whole of Bretagne, on the late king's Court, so accustomed to the rule of the bastards and Mme. de Maintenon; and they had never, for a long time, ceased to attach whomsoever they could to Spain by all sorts of promises and hopes. They were discovered just as they were taking their very last measures; but the regent and the State were strangely betrayed, and the former showed an almost incredible weakness.

His despatches captured at Poitiers.

Things having reached this point on the part of Spain and of those who were conspiring with it for their own hopes or vengeance, it became necessary to reveal in Madrid the exact state of things in France, and all the names of those concerned. Cellamare, too wary to confide to any of his own people a despatch of such consequence, wished the messenger to be chosen in Madrid, saying that he must be somewhat above a courier, but not of such quality as to excite suspicion. Accordingly they chose in Madrid a young ecclesiastic, who called himself, or others called him, the Abbé Portocarrero, and they gave him as an assistant the son of Monteleone. Nothing could be better planned than for two young men to meet casually in Paris, one arriving from Madrid, the other from the Hague, and to subsequently join each other to return to Madrid. Whether it was that the arrival of the abbé and his short stay before returning to Madrid excited the suspicions of the Abbé Dubois and his emissaries, or whether Dubois had corrupted some official of the Spanish embassy by whom he was warned that these young men were carrying an important package, or whether there was some other mystery, I cannot say. However that may be, the Abbé Dubois sent in pursuit of them; they were arrested at Poitiers, their papers taken from them and brought to Dubois by the courier despatched to convey the news.

Chance does great things sometimes. The courier from Poitiers reached the Abbé Dubois just as the Duc d'Orléans was going to the Opera. Dubois looked over the papers and told the news of the capture to the regent as he came from his box. The prince, who always went at that hour to his *roués,* did so as usual, under pretext that the Abbé Dubois had not had time to examine the papers, with a careless indifference to which everything succumbed. The first hours of his morning were never clear; his head, bewildered still with the fumes of wine and the digestion of the viands at his supper, was not in a state to understand; but this was the time chosen by Dubois to give him such an account of the papers seized at Poitiers as he thought proper. He said and showed only what he chose, and never let any one of the documents go into the hands of the regent, much less into those of others. The blind confidence and careless negligence of the prince on this occasion are incomprehensible; and what is still more so, the same conduct reigned throughout the whole of this affair in all its phases, and thus rendered the Abbé Dubois sole master of proofs, suspicions, convictions, absolutions, and punishments.

But whether it was that the regent knew more than he chose to show, and that fear of the number, names, position, and consideration of those who were mixed up in this affair made him take the course he did, or whether, as I believe, his continual negligence and his subjection under the yoke that Dubois put upon him left him in ignorance of the real depth and importance of the conspiracy and of the names of the chief persons concerned in it, certain it is that out of this curious obscurity there appeared a plot of M. and Mme. du Maine, at which they had been working long before the *lit de justice,* and immediately after the beginning of the regency, — a plot to stir into rebellion the so-called nobility, the parliament, Bretagne, and all who could be set to work to carry out what Mme. du Maine had once declared so distinctly to the Duc de La Force: "When persons have once acquired the rank of princes of the blood and the right of succession to the throne, the State may be overthrown and set ablaze before they will allow it to be wrested from them."

Cellamare arrested; his conduct.

The day after the arrival of the courier from Poitiers the Prince de Cellamare, warned on his side of the untoward event, but flattering himself that the presence of a bankrupt banker [who was with them] was the cause of the arrest of the two young men and the seizure of their papers, concealed his uneasiness under a very tranquil exterior, and went at one o'clock to M. Le Blanc, secretary of war, to ask for a packet of letters he had intrusted to those young travellers on their return to Spain, furnished as they were with a passport from the king. Le Blanc, who had had his lesson, replied that the packet had been seen, and found to contain important matters, and, so far from being returned to him, he, Le Blanc, had orders to take Cellamare back to his own house with the Abbé Dubois — for the abbé, being notified of Cellamare's arrival, had followed him promptly. They made the prince get into Le Blanc's coach and got in with him. The ambassador, who felt that such a compliment was not risked without due precautions for its execution, made no difficulty, and did not lose for a moment his coolness and tranquillity during the three hours they spent in rummaging all his desks and boxes and in selecting the papers they wanted. He behaved like a man who fears nothing and is perfectly assured as to his own conduct. He treated Le Blanc very civilly; as for Dubois, with whom he felt he need keep no terms, for the whole plot was evidently discovered, he treated him with such contempt that when Le Blanc laid hands on a little casket he called out, "Monsieur Le Blanc, Monsieur Le Blanc, let that alone; it is not for you; it is only fit for the Abbé Dubois;" adding, as he looked at Dubois, "he has been a pimp all his life; those are nothing but women's letters." The abbé laughed, not daring to be angry. Apparently it was a piece of malice Cellamare wanted to get off, for he was already old and looked older than he was. He had a great deal of wit, knowledge, and capacity, all turned in solid directions, no sort of debauchery, and all his gallantry was merely for commerce with the great world, to discover what he wanted to know, to make and hold partisans to the King of Spain and sow, without imprudence, ill-will to the regent. In other respects he lived retired in his own house, reading and working. As soon as he and his two acolytes reached his house, a detachment of mousquetaires guarded the building and doors.

I heard in the morning of the seizure at Poitiers, but not of this arrest. While I was at dinner a servant came from the Duc d'Orléans to tell me to be at the Tuileries for a Council of Regency. As this was not the regular day for it I asked if anything new had happened. The man seemed surprised at my ignorance and told us that the Spanish ambassador had been arrested.

The other foreign ministers make no remonstrance.

Tuesday is the day on which all the foreign ministers go to the Palais-Royal, and December the 13th was the first Tuesday after Cellamare's detention; they were all there, ambassadors and others. None of them made the slightest complaint as to what had occurred, and they each received a copy of two letters [captured at Poitiers and] read to the Council, which left no doubt that Cellamare was at the head of the affair, and that Alberoni was equally involved in it. In the afternoon the Spanish ambassador was made to get into a carriage with du Libois, a captain of cavalry, and a captain of dragoons, selected to accompany him to Blois and remain there with him until news was received of the Duc de Saint-Aignan's return to France.

The regent confides to me and others that M. and Mme. du Maine are in the conspiracy.

Sunday, December 25, Christmas Day, the Duc d'Orléans summoned me to go to him at the Palais-Royal at four o'clock. I found myself alone with him and M. le Duc. We sat down. It was in his little winter cabinet at the end of the short gallery. After a moment's silence, he told me to look and see if any one was in that little gallery, and if the door at the end of it was closed. I went to see; it was closed and there was no one in the gallery. That settled, the regent told us that we should certainly be surprised to hear that M. and Mme. du Maine were up to their necks in this affair of the Spanish ambassador, and that he held the written proofs of it. He added that he had forbidden the Keeper of the Seals, the Abbé Dubois, and Le Blanc, the only ones who knew of it, to let their knowledge transpire, and he requested the same secrecy and caution from us, adding that he had wished to consult M. le Duc and myself before deciding what course to take. I thought to myself that as those other three men knew of it, he must have discussed the matter with them, and probably had already decided on his course with the Abbé Dubois, and was only wishing to flatter M. le Duc and me by asking our advice. M. le Duc went straight to the point, and said he ought to arrest both of them and put them in a place where they could do no further harm. I supported that opinion, and dwelt on the danger of not doing this at once, partly to stun and throw into confusion the whole plot by removing its leaders.

We all advise their arrest.

The Duc d'Orléans agreed that this was the best course, but he dwelt on the rank of Mme. du Maine, less I think from conviction than to make the son of her brother talk. M. le Duc replied that that was an objection which it was for *him* to make; but so far from thinking it ought to be made, it was, in his opinion, a reason the more for taking that course. I insisted on the courage and firmness the regent ought to show at so critical a moment, and on the necessity for terrifying this dangerous cabal and taking from it its chief supporters in name, intrigue, and means. The regent then gave in, without reluctance.

The Duc du Maine arrested at Sceaux.

Thursday the 29th, at ten in the morning, La Billarderie, lieutenant of the body-guard, after surrounding the house at Sceaux without being seen or heard, went up to the Duc du Maine as he was leaving the house to hear mass in the chapel, and asked him, very respectfully, not to re-enter the house, but to get into a carriage he had brought for him. M. du Maine, who was alone at Sceaux with the servants, and had had time to put his papers in safe order, made no resistance; he merely said that he had expected this compliment for some days, and got immediately into the carriage. La Billarderie sat beside him, and on the front seat was Favancourt, *brigadier* of the first company of mousquetaires, who was to guard him when in prison. The Duc du Maine seemed surprised and agitated on seeing Favancourt, but when they reached the end of the avenue of Sceaux, where the body-guard came in sight, he turned pale. The silence in the carriage was scarcely broken. Now and then M. du Maine said that he was perfectly ignorant of the suspicions against him; that he was greatly attached to the king, and not less so to the Duc d'Orléans, who would certainly not fail to admit it; that it was very unfortunate his Royal Highness gave ear to his enemies, but he did not name them. All this was said spasmodically and with many sighs; now and then there were signs of the cross, low mutterings like prayers, and divings down of the body at each church or each crucifix they passed. He did not know until the next day that he was going to Dourlens. I heard all these circumstances and those of his imprisonment from Favancourt, whom I knew well; he taught me the exercise and was corporal of the first company of mousquetaires when I was in the same brigade, and since then had always courted me.

The Duchesse du Maine arrested in Paris.

The same day Ancenis, who had just received the place of his father the Duc de Charost as captain of the body-guard, arrested the Duchesse du Maine at her own house in the rue Saint-Honoré. When she found she was being taken to Dijon she declaimed vehemently, but worse when she entered the château and found herself a prisoner under the key of M. le Duc. She was furious against her nephew and the horror of the choice of that place. Nevertheless, after these first transports, she came to herself and saw that she was not in a situation to show passion. She then shut up her wrath within her, affecting indifference to everything and disdainful security. Her sons, the Prince de Dombes and the Comte d'Eu, were exiled to Eu, where they had a gentleman in ordinary always near them. Mlle. du Maine was sent to Maubuisson.

Excellent, straightforward conduct of the Comte de Toulouse.

The Comte de Toulouse, ever the same, went immediately on the arrest of M. and Mme. du Maine to see the Duc d'Orléans. He told him distinctly that he regarded the king, the regent, and the State as one and the same thing; he assured him without reserve or evasion, that he would never be found in any way contrary to the duty or the fidelity he owed to them, nor in any cabal or intrigue; that he was very sorry for what had happened to his brother, adding, immediately, that he did not answer for him. The regent repeated this to me the same day, and seemed, with good reason, charmed by this straightforward frankness. The blow thus struck upon M. and Mme. du Maine completed the scattering of their followers, whom they had used and fooled with so much art, success, and subtlety; the bulk of them opened their eyes without assistance from others; the small number of confidants who had led and blinded the rest subsided into consternation and terror.

1719.
Forged papers; purporting to come from the King of Spain.

Parliament rendered, February 4, a decree which contented itself with merely suppressing four very strange documents and forbidding all persons to print, sell, or discuss them, under pain of being prosecuted as disturbers of the public peace and guilty of leze-majesty. The first was entitled "Copy of a letter from the Catholic king, written by his hand, which Prince Cellamare, ambassador, had orders to present to the Very Christian King on September 3, 1718;" the second was entitled "Copy of a circular letter from the King of Spain to all the parliaments of France, dated September 4, 1718;" the third was a "Manifesto of the Catholic king addressed to the Three Estates of France;" and the fourth was a "Petition presented to the Catholic king by the Three Estates of France." One did not need to be very well informed to know that none of these papers ever came from Spain. They certainly were not found in the valises of the Abbé Portocarrero and his companion, nor among the papers of Cellamare. They made some noise for a time, but were soon forgotten. The regent despised them, and they did not disturb him in the least. But it was otherwise with certain verses that appeared about the same time under the name of "Philippiques" which were distributed with great rapidity and in extraordinary quantity. La Grange, formerly page of the Princesse de Conti, the king's daughter, was the author, and never denied it. All that hell could vomit of false and true was there expressed in very beautiful verse, a most poetic style, and with all the art and wit imaginable. The Duc d'Orléans knew of the poem, which was long, and wanted to see it, but was never able to do so because no one dared show it to him.

Distress of the regent at the "Philippiques."

He spoke to me several times about it, and at last exacted so decidedly that I should bring it to him that there was no way to avoid doing so. I therefore brought it; but as for reading it to him, I declared that I would never do it. He then took it and read it to himself, standing by the window of his little winter cabinet where we were. At first he stopped now and then to speak of it, without seeming very much moved. But suddenly I saw his face change; he turned to me with tears in his eyes, looking as though he were about to faint. "Ah!" he said, "this is too much; this horror is more than I can bear." He had reached the part where the villain exhibits him as resolving to murder the king, and just ready to commit the crime. Here the author redoubles his energy, poesy, invocations, beauties, terrible and terrifying invectives, hideous descriptions, pathetic pictures of the youth and innocence of the king, and of the hopes he gave, adjurations to the nation to save so dear a victim from the barbarity of his murderer, — in a word, all that art could supply most delicate, tender, strong, and damnable, imposing and affecting. I tried to profit by the gloomy silence into which he fell to take away from him that execrable paper, but I could not manage it; he expended himself in just complaints of such horrible wickedness, in tender words about the king, and then he chose to finish the reading, interrupting it now and again with comments. Never did I see a man so grieved to the soul, so deeply moved and overwhelmed by an injustice so monstrous and persistent. I myself was almost beside myself. Had any one then seen him, even the most prejudiced (provided they were so in good faith) would have yielded to that glow of innocence, that horror of the crime that was apparent in him. I had great difficulty in recovering myself, and all the pains in the world to recover him by even a little.

This La Grange, who in himself was worth nothing in any way whatever, was a good poet, though nothing else and never anything else; he had insinuated himself in that capacity at Sceaux, where he soon became one of the chief favourites of Mme. du Maine. She and her husband both knew of his life, conduct, morals, and mercenary rascality; they also knew how to employ him. He was arrested soon after and sent to the Îles Sainte-Marguerite, whence he obtained a release toward the close of the regency, and had the audacity to show himself everywhere in Paris.

Père Tellier; I try to help him; confined at La Flèche.

We have seen elsewhere the advice I gave the Duc d'Orléans as to the treatment of Père Tellier; namely, that he should be sent at once to La Flèche, and expressly forbidden to sleep away from it or to receive or write letters unless read by the person in charge of that duty; that the king should grant him a pension of six thousand francs, besides food, lodging, furniture, wood, books, and all that could conduce to his health, comfort, and amusement, with two valets and a friar to attend him, perfect independence of the Jesuits and the college, and freedom to dine out and visit in the neighbourhood. I wished to combine a recognition of his past services with public tranquillity. The Duc d'Orléans strongly approved of that advice, given before the king's death, but he acted very differently. The pension was lessened, but the liberty was greater. Tellier wanted to go and live with his intimate friend, the Bishop of Amiens, and was allowed to do so. He abused the permission like a firebrand, furious and enraged at no longer being master. His machinations in France, his intrigues in the Low-Countries, his cabals everywhere, could not remain secret. He slipped away to Flanders, and went himself to rouse up his party, which was far too languid for his fiery spirit. He did so much that the Bishop of Amiens was strongly reprimanded and Père Tellier was finally confined at La Flèche. This tyrant of the Church, indignant at being no longer able to cabal (his only consolation for the end of his reign and his terrible tyranny), found himself in a state of subjection at La Flèche both new and intolerable.

Ingratitude of the Jesuits.

The Jesuits, spies upon one another, jealous of those who have the secret authority and the consideration that authority gives them over the heads of the monastic orders and other superiors, are also amazingly ungrateful towards those who, having occupied the highest places and served their Company with the utmost labour and great success, become, through old age or infirmities, useless to it. They then regard them with contempt, and far from respecting their age, their services, or their merits, they leave them in the saddest solitude and grudge them even their food. I have seen with my own eyes three examples of this in three Jesuits, men of honour and true piety, who had held positions of confidence requiring great talents, with whom I had been intimately acquainted. The first was the rector of their postulant house in Paris, superior of the same in the provinces, the writer of several excellent books of piety, and for some years assistant to the general in Rome, on whose death he returned to Paris, because it is the Jesuit custom that each new general of the Order should have new assistants. Returning to the postulant house in Paris, aged eighty or more, he was lodged under the tiles on the top floor, in solitude, contempt, and the lack of everything. The second was a confessor; he was long ill, and finally died. They scarcely fed him, and I sent him his dinner daily for five months because I had seen his pittance and his remedies, and he could not help owning to me how much he suffered from the treatment he received. The third, very old and very infirm, had no better fate. In the end, being unable to bear it, he let me know of it, and asked to be given an asylum in my house at Versailles, on pretext of change of air. Such is the fate of all Jesuits, without excepting the most famous, unless it may be a very few who have shone at Court and before the world by their sermons and merits, and have made important friends, — such as Pères Bourdaloue, La Rue, Gaillard.

It was therefore to this neglect, contempt, and tacit reproach that Père Tellier was reduced at La Flèche, although it is true he had a pension of four thousand francs. He had always ill-treated even the Jesuits. Those who approached him when confessor to the king did so in trembling. The chief superiors, whom he governed with a rod, felt his harshness and tyranny without the slightest relief. Even the general was forced to yield to Tellier that absolute despotism which he exercises over the Company in general and all Jesuits in particular. All — and they themselves told me this in those days many a time — disapproved of the violence of his conduct, and felt alarmed for the sake of the Company; they all hated him as a brutal master, hard, inaccessible, full of himself, liking to make his scorn and his power felt. His exile and the behaviour that drew it down upon him was another motive of their spite. All these things together did not render Père Tellier's enforced retreat at La Flèche agreeable to him. He found there superiors and brethren much embittered, who, instead of feeling the terror he had formerly imposed, now felt only contempt for him and took pleasure in letting him know it. This king of the Church, and, in part, of the State, became once more a Jesuit like the rest, beneath superiors; and we can well imagine what a hell that was to a man so impetuous and so accustomed to command without reply, and to abuse that power in every direction. Consequently it was not for long. No one heard of him again, and he died in six months from the day he was taken to La Flèche.

Strange conduct of the Duchesse de Berry.

The Duchesse de Berry was living after her usual fashion, in a mixture of the loftiest pride and the basest and most shameful servitude, with austere and frequent retreats to the Carmelites, suppers with vile company, profaned by indecent and impious jests, the most shameless debauchery mingled with horrible fears of death and the devil, when all of a sudden she fell ill at the Luxembourg. It is necessary to tell all, for this is useful to history; moreover, there will not be found in these Memoirs the relation of any other gallantries than those which are necessary to an understanding of important and interesting events. The Duchesse de Berry would not restrain herself in any way, but she was indignant that the world dared to speak of that which she did not take the pains to conceal. She was pregnant by Rion. Mme. de Mouchy was their convenience in the matter, though all things went on openly to beat of drum. Mme. de Saint-

Simon, sheltered from much of this, greatly respected and beloved by the whole household, and seeing the Duchesse de Berry only at such times as she attended on formal duty at the Luxembourg, which she left the moment that duty was over, was able to ignore what was happening, although she was thoroughly informed about it.

The sacraments refused to her by the rector and Cardinal de Noailles.

The pregnancy reached its end, and this end, ill-prepared for by suppers washed down with wines and the strongest liquors, became extremely dangerous. Mme. de Saint-Simon could not avoid being assiduous when danger threatened, but she would not yield to the entreaties of the Duc and Duchesse d'Orléans to sleep at the Luxembourg. The danger becoming imminent, Languet, the celebrated rector of Saint-Sulpice, spoke to the regent of the sacraments. The first difficulty was that no one could enter the room to propose them to the duchess. But a far greater difficulty now presented itself. The rector, a man who knew his duty, declared that he would not administer the sacraments, nor permit them to be administered, so long as Rion and Mme. de Mouchy were in the chamber, or even in the Luxembourg. He said this aloud, in the hearing of every one, to the Duc d'Orléans, who was less shocked than embarrassed. Taking the rector aside he tried to make him yield to arguments. Finding him inflexible, he proposed at last to refer the matter to Cardinal de Noailles [Archbishop of Paris]. The rector accepted instantly and promised to defer to his orders as his diocesan, provided he was allowed to explain to him his reasons. The matter was pressing; the Duchesse de Berry had meanwhile confessed, during this dispute, to a Franciscan, her confessor. The Duc d'Orléans flattered himself no doubt that the diocesan would prove more amenable than the rector, to whom he was totally opposed in opinion about the Unigenitus, a matter on which the cardinal was so wholly dependent on himself. But if he really hoped this, he was greatly deceived.

Cardinal de Noailles arrived; the Duc d'Orléans took him aside with the rector, and the conversation lasted more than half an hour. As the declaration of the rector had been public the cardinal-archbishop judged it proper that his own should be so also, and when all three returned to the company and to the door of the chamber he said aloud to the rector that he had very worthily done his duty; that he should not have expected anything else from a man of his discernment and experience; he exhorted him not to let himself be deceived in a matter of such importance, and, if he needed anything further to authorize him, he forbade him, as his diocesan, to administer the sacraments to the Duchesse de Berry so long as M. de Rion and Mme. de Mouchy were in the chamber, or even in the Luxembourg and not dismissed. The excitement over so necessary a scandal, the effect in that crowded room, the embarrassment of the Duc d'Orléans, and the noise it made in the world can be imagined. Nevertheless, no one, not even the promoters of the bull, the most violent enemies of Cardinal de Noailles, the fashionable bishops, the women of the great world, nor libertines themselves blamed either the rector or the archbishop; some because they knew the rules and dared not impugn them, but the greater number from horror at the conduct of the Duchesse de Berry, and the hatred that her haughtiness drew upon her.

The question arising between the regent, the cardinal, and the rector, all three standing by the doorway, which of them should announce this resolution to the Duchesse de Berry, who had meantime confessed and expected every moment to see the holy sacrament arrive and to receive it, the cardinal assumed the duty of speaking himself to the duchess, and was moving into the room with the rector, when the Duc d'Orléans, fearing some sudden and dangerous convulsion in his daughter, implored him to wait until he could himself prepare her, and went to the door, which he held half open for a colloquy. The Duchesse de Berry put herself in a passion, answered with fury against canting hypocrites who took advantage of her state to dishonour her before the world, and did not spare her father for his folly and weakness in permitting it. Who could have believed it? she said; the cardinal and the rector ought to have been kicked downstairs! The Duc d'Orléans returned to them very small and greatly troubled, not knowing what to do between his daughter and the Church. The attention and curiosity of the large company who filled the room were, naturally, extreme. Mme. de Saint-Simon, with several of the Duchesse de Berry's ladies, was seated in the recess of a window at a little distance and saw the whole performance, being informed from time to time of other particulars.

Cardinal de Noailles was there more than two hours, and then, seeing that he could not enter the room without a sort of violence quite the contrary of persuasion, he thought it indecent to stay longer. He therefore reiterated his orders to the rector, and told him to watch and not allow the sacraments to be administered clandestinely. He then went up to Mme. de Saint-Simon, took her aside, and told her what had passed, regretted it with her, but said he could not avoid the scandal. The Duc d'Orléans hastened to tell his daughter of the departure of the cardinal, which was a great relief to him. But on leaving her room he was much astonished to find the rector established close to the door, and to be informed that he had taken that post and there he should stay in order not to be deceived about the sacraments. In fact, he did stay there firmly four days and nights, except for short intervals, when he went to his house near the Luxembourg for food and rest, leaving two priests on guard till his return. Finally, the danger being past, he raised the siege.

The Duchesse de Berry, safely delivered of a girl, thought only of recovery. She was infinitely pained at the manner in which every one, even the populace, had taken her illness and all that had happened concerning it. She fancied she should regain something by opening the gates of the gardens of the Luxembourg, which she had long since closed to the public. People were very glad of this, and profited by it, but that was all. The duchess vowed herself to white for six months; at which vow the world only laughed.

Death of Mme. de Maintenon. Her life at Saint-Cyr.

Saturday, April 15, the vigil of the first Sunday after Easter, died at Saint-Cyr, in the evening, the celebrated and fatal Mme. de Maintenon. What a noise this event would have made in Europe had it happened a few years earlier! It was little known at Versailles, which is so near Saint-Cyr, and scarcely mentioned in Paris. I have said so much of this too famous, unhappily famous, woman at the time of the king's death that little is left to say at the present time; though, having figured so powerfully and banefully for thirty-five years without a break, everything, even to her last years of seclusion, is of interest. She retired to Saint-Cyr at the moment of the king's death, and had the good sense to assume the reputation of being dead to the world, and never again to set foot outside the enclosure of that establishment. She would see no one from the outside (except the very few persons I shall presently mention), nor would she ask for anything, nor recommend any one, nor meddle in any matter whatsoever in which her name could be mixed up. Cardinal de Rohan saw her every week; the Duc du Maine also, who remained with her three or four hours *tête-à-tête.* All things beamed upon her when he was announced; she kissed her "mignon" (for she always called him so) with the utmost tenderness. Mme. de Caylus, Mme. de Dangeau, and Mme. de Lévi were admitted; also the Duc de Noailles, for whom she seemed to care but little; Maréchal de Villeroy, when he could find the time, was always very warmly welcomed; Cardinal de Bissy hardly ever went there; a few obscure and fanatical bishops occasionally; Bloin now and then; and the Bishop of Chartres (Merinville), the diocesan and superior of the establishment constantly.

Once a week when the Queen of England was at Saint-Germain she came to dine with Mme. de Maintenon; but never from Chaillot, where she spent much time. Both had their armchairs in which they faced each other. At the dinner-hour a table was placed between them with their covers, the first dishes, and a bell. The young ladies of the house waited on them, served them with drink, plates, and other dishes when the bell rang; the queen was always very kind to them. The meal over, they removed everything from the room, and brought in coffee. The queen stayed two or three hours *tête-à-tête* with Mme de Maintenon, after which they embraced and parted. Mme. de Maintenon made three or four steps in receiving the queen and at parting from her. The young ladies, who were in the antechamber, accompanied the queen to her carriage; they were very fond of her, for she was always very gracious to them. They were also charmed with Cardinal de Rohan, who never came with empty hands, bringing them bonbons and confectionery enough to regale them for several days. Mme. de Maintenon was pleased with these trifles. Her mornings were occupied with the letters she received and answered, chiefly from superiors of communities of priests, and seminaries, from abbesses and even simple nuns, for the taste for ruling had survived all else, and as she wrote singularly well and easily she enjoyed her letter writing. All these details I obtained from Mme. de Tibouville, a Rochechouart, without property, who had lived from childhood at Saint-Cyr.

Mme. de Maintenon rose early and went to bed early, as she had always done at Court. Her prayers lasted long; she read to herself books of devotion, and sometimes she made the young girls read to her a little history and took pleasure in making them discuss it, and in giving them instruction on such subjects. She heard mass from a gallery that was close to the door of her room; very rarely from the choir. She received the sacrament twice a week, usually between seven and eight o'clock in the morning, after which she returned to her gallery, where on those days she stayed a long time. Her dinner was simple, but delicate and very choice in its simplicity, always abundant. The Duc de Noailles, Mornay, and Bloin never let her want for game from Saint-Germain and Versailles, or for fruit from the buildings. She took nothing in the evenings. Sometimes, on very fine days without wind, she walked for a while in the garden.

She appointed all the superiors, chief and subaltern, and all the officers. A succinct report of the routine of the house was made to her daily, and for all else, the superior took her orders. She was "Madame," to the household, who were under her control, and though her manners were civil and gentle to the ladies of Saint-Cyr and kind to the young girls, they all trembled before her. No abbess, daughter of France, such as there used to be in former days, was ever so despotic, so punctually obeyed, so feared, so respected; but with it all, she was loved by almost every one at Saint-Cyr. The priests were under the same subjection, the same dependence. Never did she speak of anything relating to the government or to the Court before the young ladies; often of the late king with praise, but not earnestly in any way, and never alluding to intrigues, cabals, or public business.

I often wondered why the maréchals, d'Harcourt so intimately bound to her Tallard, Villars who owed her so much, Mme. du Maine and her children, for whom she had trodden under foot all human and divine laws, the Prince de Rohan, and many others, never went to see her. The fall of the Duc du Maine at the *lit de justice* at the Tuileries gave her the first mortal blow. It is not presuming too much to suppose that she was well informed of the schemes and measures of her "darling," and was sustained by that hope; but when she heard of his arrest she succumbed; a continued fever seized her, and she died at the age of eighty-three, in full possession of her mind and faculties.

Curious but unintelligible statement of Fleury's power over the king.

I have spoken elsewhere of the Abbé de Vittement, whose merit, and that alone, had made him sub-preceptor to the king, — a very rare thing at Court, and without his ever thinking of it, or any one for him. He lived at the Court in solitude, though never sulky or singular, but making himself generally liked and much esteemed. An abbey with a revenue of twelve thousand francs a year became vacant about this time, and the regent proposed to the king to give it to his sub-preceptor and to tell him so himself. The king was delighted, sent for him at once, and told him. Vittement expressed his gratitude, but modestly asked to be excused from accepting it. He was urged by the king, the regent, and Maréchal de Villeroy, who was present He answered that he had sufficient means on which to live. The Maréchal insisted, and told him he could use the income for giving alms. Vittement replied humbly that it was not worth while to receive charity in order to give it, held firm, and retired. This action, which has but few examples, done with such perfect simplicity, made quite a noise and increased the esteem and respect his virtues had already acquired. But it vexed M. de Fréjus, who saw the king's affection for the abbé increased by it. As soon as the latter perceived this he considered his vocation at an end, — all the more because he felt that if he were really loved and liked, he could hope nothing for the true end he had in view. Soon after M. de Fréjus advised him very gently to retire. He did so with joy, and went to the "Christian Doctrine," which he never left again, and where he received scarcely any one.

Vittement made a prophecy as celebrated as it is surprising, the key of which was sought in vain. Bidault related it to me. Bidault was one of the *valets de chambre* whom the Duc de Beauvilliers selected for the service of Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne. He had intelligence, education, and sense, and, what is more, a true and solid piety. M. de Beauvilliers loved him, and the Duc de Bourgogne was very kind to him and gave him the care of his books. This had made me know him well and the more familiarly because he took charge of all the affairs of La Trappe in Paris. He was placed with the king in the latter's childhood, and when he began to collect a few books, Bidault took charge of them. This brought him into relations with the Abbé de Vittement, and presently allied them in friendship and confidence. Bidault sometimes came to see me, and he also went to see Vittement in his retirement. Becoming alarmed at the first rays of the omnipotence of Fréjus, lately made cardinal, he spoke of it to Vittement, who showed no surprise and let him talk. Bidault, amazed at the cold and silent tranquillity with which he was listened to, urged Vittement to tell him the reason. "His omnipotence," replied the abbé, quietly, "will last as long as his life, and his reign will be unbounded and without trouble. He has known how to bind the king by such strong fetters that the king can never break them. What I tell you now is what I *know*. I cannot tell you more; but if the cardinal dies before me, I will explain to you what I cannot explain during his lifetime." Bidault told me this a few days later, and I have heard since that Vittement said the same thing to others. Unfortunately, he died before the cardinal, and carried off with him this interesting secret. Events proved but too well that Vittement spoke the truth.[1]

Never, after his retirement, did he dream of going to see the king or of visiting any one. He lived at the "Christian Doctrine," in penitence and frugal mediocrity, in complete aloofness, in constant preparation for the better life, and he died a saintly death at the end of some years. Maréchal de Villeroy went to see him sometimes, in spite of his own wishes, and always came away charmed, though he sometimes met with short but well-placed moral observations, which perhaps he was not in search of.

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[1] The Marquis d'Argenson [son of the Keeper of the Seals] reports the same fact in his manuscript Memoirs: "I forgot to say that the Abbé de Vittement said to his friends to whom he confided this secret, that if he survived the cardinal he would tell what was that indissoluble bond between the king and Cardinal Fleury." (Note by the French editor.)

IX.

The wonders of the Mississippi.

Law was doing wonders with his Mississippi. They had made a sort of language to suit their manipulations and facilitate their management, which I shall not undertake to explain any more than his other financial operations. It was who should have Mississippi. Immense fortunes were made by it, almost at a stroke. Law, besieged by suppliants and aspirants, saw his door forced, his windows entered from the garden, while some of them came tumbling down the chimney of his cabinet. People talked in millions. Law, who, as I have said, came to me every Tuesday between eleven and twelve o'clock, had often urged me to accept some shares in it without their costing me anything; offering to manage the matter without my meddling in it, and to make it bring me in several millions. So many persons of all conditions had made fortunes by their own management, that there was no doubt Law could have made me gain more, and even more rapidly; but I would never lend myself to the scheme. Law then addressed Mme. de Saint-Simon, who was equally inflexible. Enriching for enriching, he would rather have enriched me than many others, and by that interest have bound to him a man in my situation with the regent. He spoke to the latter, asking him to try and overcome me by his authority. The regent began to speak of it more than once, but I evaded him.

At last, one day when he had given me a rendezvous at Saint-Cloud, where he went to work and to walk afterwards, being both of us seated on the balustrade of the orangery which overlooks the descent into the Goulotte woods, he spoke to me again of the Mississippi, and urged me to receive some from Law; the more I resisted, the more he urged, and the more he branched out into arguments. At last he grew angry; and said it was too vainglorious to refuse what the king wanted to give me, for he was acting for him, and that other people of my rank and dignity would run after it. I told him that such feelings would be those of a fool and an impudent person, instead of a vainglorious one, as he said, and they were not mine; and since he pressed me so much I would tell him my reasons, which were: that since the days of King Midas I had never heard of and still less seen any one who had the faculty of turning into gold whatever he touched; that I did not believe that virtue was given to Law, but I thought his scheme was a clever game, a skilful and novel trick of legerdemain, which put the property of Peter into the pocket of John, which enriched some at the cost of others; and that sooner or later the thing would dry up, the game would be exposed, an infinite number of persons ruined, restitutions would be difficult if not impossible, especially restitution of gains of this kind; and, finally, that I abhorred having to do with the property of others, and for nothing on earth would I burden myself with it, even indirectly.

Law and the regent urge me in vain to accept some.

The Duc d'Orléans did not know how to answer that, but still, displeased and persistent, he came back to his idea of refusing the benefits of the king. Impatience happily laid hold of me; I told him I was so far from any such folly that I would make him a proposal, which I should never have mentioned but for what he had said, and which, in fact, only came into my head at the moment. I explained to him the expenses that

I refuse; but accept payment of an old debt.

had ruined my father for the defence of Blaye against the forces of the Prince de Condé, who had besieged the place eighteen months. My father had paid the garrison, furnished the rations, ammunitioned the place, cast cannon, and supported five hundred gentlemen whom he had collected; besides other expenses incurred to save the place to the king, — all drawn from his own means and not from the country. After the troubles were over, five hundred thousand francs of written orders for payment were sent to him, on which he never received a sou, for M. Fouquet was arrested just before he was about to begin to pay them off. I told the Duc d'Orléans that if he chose to make up the loss of that sum, a loss my father and I had borne so long a time for services so essential rendered to the king (not to speak of the interest due for so many years), it would be a justice which I could take with a good grace, and would accept with much gratitude; returning to him the written orders as they were paid off, to be burned in his presence. The Duc d'Orléans was very willing, and spoke of it the next day to Law. My notes and orders were, little by little, burned up in the regent's cabinet; and that is what has paid for the improvements I have made at La Ferté.

Absurd but persistent theories of parliament as to its power.

Parliament, more irritated than subdued by the *lit de justice* at the Tuileries, had now recovered from its first bewilderment; it was very natural and perfectly consistent that it should not only think itself not bound to regard what had been done at the *lit de justice* in spite of its remonstrances, but that it should claim the right to act in a manner diametrically opposed to the tenor of the decrees then passed. This is what parliament now did, step by step, with all possible firmness and continuity, and as much circumspection as would insure the carrying out of its intentions, by opposing all the registrations necessary to the various operations of Law. The Duc d'Orléans was accurately informed and greatly annoyed at this conduct, and Law was extremely embarrassed; he had many manœuvres and operations on hand which required a submissive parliament, and he had to do with a regent who disliked strong measures and who seemed quite exhausted with the one to which he had lately been compelled to have recourse. In this perplexity Law imagined a way to cut the Gordian knot. His paper was then at its highest mark; the ardour of Frenchmen was for it; there were few persons, in comparison with the many, who did not prefer the paper to specie. He therefore proposed to the regent to refund with this paper, by agreement or force, all the costs of parliament, and defend the step towards the public on the ground of removing the venality of the offices, which led to such great abuses, by putting them all in the hands of the king to dispose of gratuitously (as they were before they became venal); thus making him master of parliament by granting simple commissions to hold the offices from one vacation to another, to be continued or changed at each term of parliament at the king's good pleasure.

Law proposes a scheme to hold parliament in check.

A scheme so advantageous, without drawing a purse-string, dazzled the regent. The Duc de La Force supported the idea in concert with Dubois, who did not wish to appear too much, but was making others act, and, in fear of reverses, was keeping behind the tapestry, whence he directed his emissaries. Dubois saw his own benefit in this reimbursement, full as he was of being master of the kingdom under the regent's name. Nevertheless, he felt the risks of the transition, and did not choose to commit himself. Law had never opened his lips to me in any way that could make me surmise this project;

and I have reason to think, though nothing of the kind was evident, that they dared not risk an examination on my part, but hoped to take me unawares, in what they imagined to be my hatred and my interests, by the proposition which the regent was to make to me, and thus inveigle me into an approbation to which impetus could afterwards be imparted. I have always leaned to the belief that it was this idea that led the Duc d'Orléans to consult me on the matter. They knew me to be the man of all the world who bore most impatiently all pretensions and enterprises against the royal authority, and who, from attachment to my rank and dignity, was always most openly and publicly exasperated by the usurpations of parliament.

I prevent the regent from adopting it.

However that may be, one afternoon when I was working as usual, *tête-à-tête* with the Duc d'Orléans, he began to talk about parliament without anything giving rise to it, explaining the shackles it put upon him, the small account it made, publicly, of the *lit de justice* of the Tuileries, the little fruit he had gained from that step; and then, all of a sudden, he proposed the above expedient, pulling from his pocket a well-reasoned paper on the scheme, of which I had never heard one word till that moment. I entered into all his complaints of the conduct of parliament and agreed with his reasons for compelling it to its duty in regard to the royal authority; but I added at once that, as for the project, it seemed to me, at a first view of it, very unjust on one side and very daring on the other; and it was not, I thought, a matter to be decided on without mature deliberation, and after considering and weighing the important and wide-spreading consequences. He would not let me say more, and insisted on reading the document straight through without interruption, in spite of his bad eyesight, and then a second time, stopping and arguing upon it.

This second reading confirmed me in the aversion I felt to the scheme, and I said so and argued against it; but the regent, delighted and already carried away with it, was not pleased with my resistance. Seeing him so biased and refolding the paper to put it in his pocket, I felt all the danger into which they were going to plunge him. I begged him to let me have the memorandum and take it home to consider it at my ease. He consented on condition that no one should see it but myself, and he exacted a promise that I would bring it back the day but one following, and refused to allow me a longer time. I kept my word, and more too; for I wrote with my own hand so strong an answer (which I read to the Duc d'Orléans) that he became convinced the project was a dangerous chimera. Those who had made and counselled it found him so armed against their reasons that they had nothing to reply, and kept silence, — but not for long. The scheme was too dear to Law and to Dubois to be abandoned: to Dubois, as removing all sorts of present and future obstacles to the establishment and preservation of his omnipotence; to Law for his own support in his tremendous output of paper, of which he felt from afar all the burden in spite of the great vogue in which he then was. We shall see that the following year was spent in struggles between the government and the parliament. Those struggles gave the promoters of the abandoned scheme a chance to resuscitate it; none of them ever mentioned it to me, except Law, who once or twice expressed a few regrets for such a fine stroke wasted.

Money was in such abundance — that is to say, Law's bank-notes, which people then preferred to specie — that

The madness of the Mississippi; all heads turned.

Diminution of specie, and recoinage.

four millions were paid to the Elector of Bavaria, and three millions to Sweden, mostly old debts. Soon after, the regent gave eighty thousand francs to Meuse, and eight hundred thousand francs to Mme. Châteauthiers, lady of the Bedchamber to the Duchesse d'Orléans, who had loved him for many years. The business of the shares in the Company of the Indies [or West] commonly called "The Mississippi," established for the last few months in the rue Quincampoix, from which horses and carriages were excluded, had now increased so enormously that persons rushed there all day long, and it was necessary to place guards at each end of the street, with drums and bells to give warning when business opened at seven o'clock in the morning and when it closed at night; and also to prevent a crowd from assembling there on Sundays and fête-days. Never was folly and madness like it. The regent made a great distribution of these shares among the general and staff officers, according to grades, who were employed in the war against Spain. Shortly after, the treasury began to diminish specie month by month at three regular intervals, and next came a general recoinage of it.

Law desires to become a Catholic. His converters.

Law's bank as well as his Mississippi were now at their highest point. Confidence was unbounded. People rushed to change houses and lands for paper, and this paper caused the commonest articles to become of enormous price. All heads were turned. Foreigners envied our luck and tried in every way to obtain a share of it. The English, so able and consummate in banks, companies, and commerce, were taken in by the prospect, and repented themselves later. Law, though cool and prudent, felt his modesty fail him. He was tired of being a subaltern. He now aimed to be great amid this splendour; and so did Dubois and the regent for him; but for this elevation two obstacles would have to be overcome in the case of Law: the condition of foreigner, and that of heretic. The first could be changed only by naturalization preceded by abjuration. For this a *converter* was needed who would not look too closely into things, and of whom they could feel perfectly sure before committing themselves. The Abbé Dubois found him as it were in his pocket. This was the Abbé Tencin, whom the devil afterwards helped to a most astounding fortune; for true it is that he sometimes departs from his usual rule and rewards his own; by which examples he dazzles others and inveigles them. This Abbé Tencin was a priest and a rascal, whose real name was Guérin; his sister was the mistress of the Abbé Dubois, soon his confidante, and then the directress of many of his schemes and secrets. This connection was long concealed; at any rate while Dubois' career had need of caution; after he became archbishop (still more when he was cardinal) she was known publicly as his mistress, ruled his household openly, and held a sort of Court, as if she were the channel of all favours and fortune. Meantime she had begun to make the fortune of her beloved brother. She presented him to her lover, who soon found him a man expressly made to second him in all things and to be singularly useful to him.

Such were the apostles of a proselyte like Law, provided for him by the Abbé Dubois. They already knew each other; and this was the state of things when it became a question of bringing back into the bosom of the Church a Protestant, or an Anglican, — for he scarcely knew what he really was. The work was not difficult; but they had the sense to do it and consummate it secretly, so that for some time it was a problem; and thus they saved appearances while the instruction was going on, and some part, at least, of the scandal and ridicule of such a conversion performed by such converters.

Determination of the Duchesse de Berry to declare her marriage to Rion.

The Duc d'Orléans had informed me about this time of the fixed intention of the Duchesse de Berry to declare her secret marriage to Rion. I was not surprised at the marriage, knowing that mixture of passion and fear of the devil, but I was extremely astonished at this fury for declaring it in a person so superbly haughty and vainglorious. She had gone to Meudon, and thence to La Muette, lying in a carriage between two sheets. She grew no better; the pain increased at shorter intervals; fever was always marked and sometimes very strong. The fluctuations of hope and fear supported her till the beginning of July, but then her malady increased so much that on the 14th they began to feel serious alarm about her. The night was so restless that they sent to rouse the regent at the Palais-Royal; and at the same time Mme. de Pons wrote to Mme. de Saint-Simon, urging her to come at once and establish herself at La Muette. She yielded to this request and went there at once, and did not leave it again while the duchess lived. She found the danger great; one bleeding had been done in the arm on that day, July 15, and another in the foot; her confessor, a Franciscan, had been sent for. I shall here interrupt the course of this illness, which lasted seven days, to give a brief *coup d'œil* to that princess as a whole, at the risk of some slight repetition.

Mme. de Saint-Simon goes to her in her last illness.

Brief sketch of the Duchesse de Berry.

Mme. la Duchesse de Berry made so much noise in the brief space of a very short life that, sad as the matter is, it is curious and deserves to be dwelt upon. Born with a superior mind, and being, when she chose, equally agreeable and amiable, with a figure that was imposing and on which the eye rested with pleasure (though injured at the last by too much flesh), she talked with singular grace and a natural eloquence which was all her own and flowed spontaneously and easily, with an appropriateness of language that surprised and charmed. What might she not have made of these talents with the king and Mme. de Maintenon, who only wished to love her; with the Duchesse de Bourgogne, who had made her marriage and regarded her as her very own; with her father, regent of the kingdom, who had eyes for her alone,—if the vices of her heart and mind and soul had not turned so many noble gifts into dangerous poisons. The most inordinate pride, the most persistent falsehood she took for virtues and piqued herself upon them; while irreligion, which she thought adorned her mind, made the climax of all the rest. What seemed extraordinary was the amazing contrast between a pride that lifted her to the skies and a debauchery which led her to sup, not only with people of quality, but with such a man as Père Riglet, Jesuit, a teller of loose stories, and other *canailles* who would never have been admitted into decent houses, together with the *roués* of the Duc d'Orléans, with him or without him, she herself taking pleasure in exciting their indecency and impiety.

In spite of a depravity so universal and so public, she was indignant that any one dared to speak of it. She declared boldly that it was not permitted to talk of persons of her rank, not even to blame their public actions, still less what they did in private. It was this that irritated her against every one, as violating the sacred rights of her person, criminally wanting in respect, and undeserving of pardon. Her death was a singular spectacle. The long suffering she had endured had neither induced her to care for this life by following a regimen necessary to her condition, nor to think of the life to come, until at last her relations and physicians were compelled to speak a language to her such as princes never hear except in some great extremity. She then submitted to remedies both for this world and the next. She received the sacraments with open doors and talked to those present on her life and state, but as a queen in each. After the scene was over, and she was again shut up with her intimates, she applauded herself for the firmness she had shown and asked them if she had not spoken well, and whether she was not dying with grandeur and courage.

Mme. de Saint-Simon sends for me. Grief of the regent.

Mme. de Saint-Simon, seeing that the end approached and that there was no one at La Muette with whom the Duc d'Orléans could feel at liberty, sent me word that she advised me to come and be with him in these sad hours. It seemed to me that my arrival did give him pleasure, and that I was not useless by reason of the comfort it gave him to pour himself freely out to me. He wished me to take entire charge of what would have to be done after the Duchesse de Berry's death, such as the opening of her body, and all the other details which demanded his orders and his decision, so that he himself might not be importuned by such agitating things; he wished me not to ask his orders about anything; moreover he told the household of the princess that he had given me those orders, and that it was to me that they must go for theirs.

As the evening advanced and the Duchesse de Berry became worse, being now without consciousness, her father returned to the chamber and stood by the pillow of her bed, the curtains of which were open. I did not leave him there long, but pushed him gently into the cabinet, where there was no one. The windows were open; he leaned on the iron baluster and his sobs redoubled so much that I feared he would suffocate. When this violent attack was over he began to talk to me of the miseries of this world and the little duration of what is most pleasurable. I took occasion to say to him what God gave me to say, with all the gentleness, unction, and tenderness that was possible to me. Not only did he receive well what I said, but he answered it and continued the conversation. After we had been there about an hour Mme. de Saint-Simon sent me softly word that it was time that I should try to send the Duc d'Orléans away, as the only way to leave the cabinet was through the chamber. His carriage was ready, for Mme. de Saint-Simon had been thoughtful enough to send for it. It was not without difficulty that I could tear him away, plunged as he was in the bitterest grief. I made him cross the chamber swiftly, and entreated him to return to Paris. That was another difficulty to overcome; but in the end he yielded.

Death of the Duchesse de Berry.

The Duchesse de Berry died at midnight on the 21st of July. Afflicted as the Duc d'Orléans was, comfort was not long in coming. The yoke under which she had held him, and which he had often found so heavy, was broken. Especially was he relieved of the horror of declaring her marriage to Rion and all its consequences, — an embarrassment all the greater because on opening her body the poor princess was found to be pregnant; a derangement was also found in the brain. All this promised great future troubles, which were smothered by her death.

Illness of Mme. de Saint-Simon.

Mme. de Saint-Simon, who, as we have seen in its place, was forced, and I too, to consent that she should be lady of honour to the Duchesse de Berry, had not been able at any time to find the moment when she could properly quit that office. Every sort of consideration was shown her, every liberty accorded to her; but nothing could console her for occupying that post, so that she felt the relief, not to say the satisfaction, of a deliverance she had little expected from a princess only twenty-four years old. But the extreme fatigue of the last days of the illness and of those which succeeded the death, caused her a malignant fever, of which she was six weeks at the point of death in a country-house which Fontanieu had lent her at Passy to take the waters at Forges and to rest. She was two months in recovering. This accident, which almost drove me out of my mind, kept me from the knowledge of everything for two months, during which I never left that house, scarcely her chamber, hearing nothing and seeing none but a few indispensable friends. When she began to recover I asked the Duc d'Orléans for lodgings in the new château at Meudon. He lent me the whole château all furnished. We passed the rest of the summer there, and several other summers. It is a charming spot for walks and drives. We expected to see only our intimate friends; but its proximity to Paris overwhelmed us with company, so that the new château was often full of lodgers, not to speak of passing visitors.

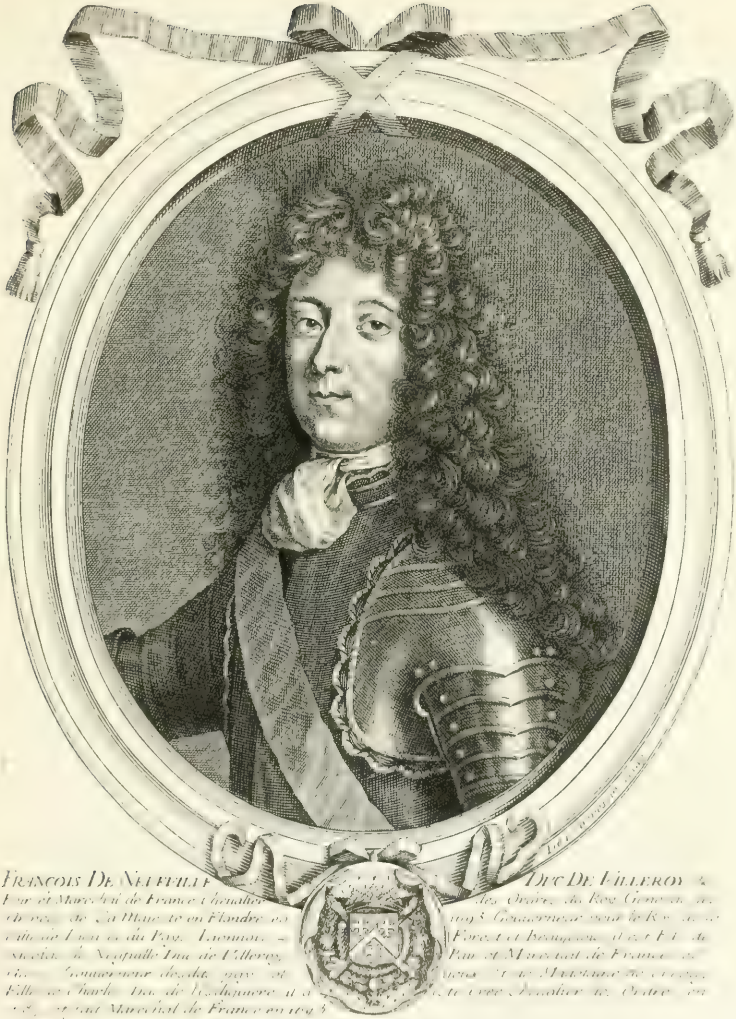
La Muette given to the king for his amusements.

The Duc d'Orléans paid the king a charming compliment, well-suited to his years, by proposing that he should use La Muette for his amusements, and go out there and have collations. The king was enchanted. He thought he was really having something of his own; and he took delight in going there and eating bread and milk and fruit and vegetables, and amusing himself with all that diverts a boy of his age. The place in changing masters changed also its governor. The Duc d'Humières spoke to me in behalf of Pezé. I obtained the post for him, and he knew how to manage the place in a way to make it more and more agreeable to the king.

We have now reached a very curious and interesting epoch. What a pity that the ever-imposing and exacting influence of the Abbé Dubois over the Duc d'Orléans did not permit the latter to place his usual confidence in those who were most faithfully attached to him! This misfortune will deprive these Memoirs of a great deal of curious information. I will not and I cannot write down anything that did not either pass before my own eyes, or that I did not hear from those who were concerned in it. I prefer to frankly own my ignorance rather than risk conjectures which are often little other than romances; I shall often be reduced to that dilemma, and I would rather have the shame of owning it in the remainder of these Memoirs than create fictions and mislead my readers, — should these Memoirs ever see the light.

The regent wishes to make me governor of the king.

Working one day as usual with the regent towards the close of this year, he interrupted me soon after we had begun by making complaints of the Maréchal de Villeroy. He often did so, but on this occasion, getting more and more excited, he suddenly rose and said it was not to be endured any longer, — that was his expression, — and he wished to turn him out at once and make me governor to the king. My surprise was great, but I did not lose my judgment. I smiled and replied gently that he could not really think of it. "I think of it very much," he replied; "so much that I intend it shall be done, and I shall not delay doing what ought to have been done long ago. What have you to say against it?" With that he began to walk, or rather to twirl, about the room. I asked him if he had maturely reflected on it. Thereupon he delivered himself of all his reasons for removing the maréchal and those for putting me in his place, which latter were too flattering to repeat here. I let him



FRANCOIS DE NEUFVILLE DUC DE VILLEROY &
Pair et Mareschal de France Chevalier des Ordres du Roy General des ar-
mées de Sa Majesté en Flandre en 1693 Gouverneur pour le Roy de la
ville de Lyon et du Pays Lyonnois Forest et Beaujolois il est Fils de
Nicolas de Neufville Duc de Villeroy, Pair et Mareschal de France et
cy devant Gouverneur de Sa Majesté et [illegible] de Madelaine de Crequy,
Fille de Charles Duc de Lesdiguieres il a esté créé Chevalier des Ordres en
[illegible] et fut Mareschal de France en 1693

Maréchal de Villeroy

say as much as he wished, and then I talked in my turn, without allowing him to interrupt me. I agreed to all he said of the Maréchal de Villeroy, because there was no disagreeing with any of his complaints, his reasons, and his deductions; but I stoutly opposed his removing him. I reminded the regent of all the reasons I had formerly given him against taking the superintendence of the king's education from the Duc du Maine, which he himself had thought sound and good, and was only prevented from following by the persistent persecution of M. le Duc. I told him that the Maréchal de Villeroy was only what he himself made him, and what any one else with so much gas and self-conceit and so little mind and common-sense would inevitably be; that he had spoiled him, and the maréchal was simply taking advantage of it; that every one in public and in private was astonished to see how he awed him with that air of martial superiority, as if he were still a youth in the days of Monsieur; and he ought therefore not to be surprised at the advantage the maréchal took of it. I told him he had only to change this singular and dangerous conduct and keep firmly to the change, and he would see that Villeroy would fancy himself lost, and tremble, cringe, and grow supple and respectful; whereas, if he turned him out, he would make him a public martyr, the idol of parliament, the people, and the provinces, to a point that would make him, if not dangerous, at least embarrassing.

I dissuade him.

Shaken, but not driven from his intention, the regent tried to weaken me by increasing the temptation of the post of governor, and by overwhelming me with what he said about it. I expressed my gratitude, like a man who felt very deeply the value of the appointment and the seasoning he gave to it, but whom it did not dazzle. I reminded him that he ought never to appoint as governor, or to any other post about the king, any person who was particularly attached to himself, lest the monarch should die young without posterity, — in view of his having been so cruelly, iniquitously, and universally accused of many recent horrors; and this argument, so strong and real, resulting from the perverse nature of things, made me the last man in the world on whom the choice ought to fall, as well as the most radically excluded by nature; so that I believed I should be doing him a bad and most dangerous service by accepting his offer. We argued the same things over and over; and the conversation ended by the regent saying that we would talk of the matter again. To which I replied that, as for me, it was settled now, and that very certainly I would not be governor to the king; and as for Maréchal de Villeroy, he ought to be careful against the influence of others and his own inclinations, and not be led into such a blunder. We said no more then; he spoke of it two or three times later, but always more feebly, until he ended by agreeing with me not to think of it again, and to treat the maréchal as I advised him to do. But this he never had the strength to attempt. He treated him as usual, and the maréchal, consequently, went on assuming an insolent air to him. I was provoked, but I did not dare to say anything, lest I should bring the regent back to the desire to get rid of him.

1720.
Confusion in the finances; Law made controller-general.

The disorder of the finances was increasing daily, also the squabbles between d'Argenson and Law, each of whom was now complaining of the other. Matters had finally come to such a pass that it was necessary that one of the two should yield to the other an administration in which their rivalry was creating the utmost confusion. Whatever intimacy might exist between d'Argenson and Dubois, who had so far failed to make Law and d'Argenson agree, the prospect of his cardinalate, and the necessity of having plenty of money to spend upon it, did not allow Dubois to hesitate in this extremity as to whose side he should take. Law's conversion had an object which it was now high time to attain. D'Argenson, seeing the storm approach, felt he was in a fragile place, and determined to save himself. He had too much sense and knowledge of the world and of those with whom he had to do not to feel that if he clung to the finances they would drag from him the office of Keeper of the Seals. He therefore yielded to Law, who was immediately appointed controller-general of the finances, and who, in that position of singular elevation for him, continued to come and see me every Tuesday morning, endeavouring always to convince me about his miracles, past and to come. D'Argenson continued to be Keeper of the Seals. The public murmured greatly on seeing a foreigner controller-general, and all France delivered over to a system which was now beginning to be distrusted. But Frenchmen accustom themselves to everything, and many were consoled by getting rid of d'Argenson's fantastic hours of work and crabbed temper. The Duc d'Orléans had told me in advance what he was about to do, but he did not consult me. The Abbé Dubois had by this time completely invaded him; and I avoided putting myself forward about anything.

Insecurity of Law's system and bank; it becomes apparent.

But Law's system was drawing to an end. If they had been content with his bank, and his bank reduced to wise and equitable limits, the money of the kingdom might have been doubled and great facility introduced into the country's commerce and into that of private persons with one another; because, if the bank were able always to face its liabilities, its notes, being continually payable at their full value, would have been ready money, and often preferable to coin through convenience of transportation. But it must be admitted, as I maintained to the regent in his cabinet, and said boldly to the Council of Regency, when the bank project passed, that, good as this system might be in itself, it could only be good in a republic, or a monarchy like that of England, where the finances are arbitrarily governed solely by those who furnish them and who furnish only so much and as it pleases them. But in a State so volatile and changeable rather than arbitrary as that of France, stability is, necessarily, lacking; consequently also a firm and judicious confidence, — inasmuch as a king, and under him a mistress, a minister, favourites, or extreme necessity (such as that the late king met with in the years from 1707 to 1710), a hundred things, in short, might bankrupt the bank, the temptations of which would be too great and at the same time too easy. But when to what was real in this banking system they added the chimera of the Mississippi, its shares, its lingo, its science, that is to say, its hocus-pocus for taking money from some and giving it to others, it would surely result — inasmuch as they had neither mines nor the philosopher's stone — in those shares proving worthless, and in a very few persons being enriched by the ruin of the greater number. And this is what actually happened.

Inconceivable prodigality of the regent.

The overthrow of the bank and the system was hastened by the inconceivable prodigality of the regent, who, without limit, and even, if that could be, without selection, was unable to resist importunity, but gave with both hands, and often to persons who scoffed at his act and gave thanks only to their own effrontery. It is difficult to believe what one actually saw; posterity will consider as a fable what we ourselves remember now as a dream. So much was given away to a greedy and prodigal community, always grasping, always necessitous through its luxury, its licentiousness, its confusion of positions, that paper lacked, the mills could not furnish enough. From that fact may be inferred the unimaginable abuse of what was established originally as a resource always ready, but which could only exist as such by balancing the two ends, and reserving enough coin to answer instantly to all demands. This is what I questioned Law about every Tuesday morning. He put me off with specious words for a long time before he owned to me his embarrassments, and modestly and timidly complained that the regent was throwing everything out of windows. I knew from the outside more than he thought, and it was that knowledge that made me press him so insistently on the state of his schedule. When admitting at last, though faintly, what he could not conceal, he assured me that, provided the regent left him free to act, he was not lacking in resources. That did not convince me.

Grievous and infinite results.

The bank-notes were already beginning to depreciate, soon after to lose credit, and then their discredit became general. Hence the necessity of forcibly maintaining them, inasmuch as this could no longer be done by their own value; and the moment force was shown, every man despaired of his safety. They came at last to coercive authority; they suppressed the use of gold, silver (I mean coined money), and precious stones; and they tried to convince the nation that from the days when Abraham paid four hundred shekels of silver, current coin, for Sarah's sepulchre to the present day, the wisest nations of the earth had been under the grossest error and delusion as to money and the metals of which it was made; that paper was the only profitable and necessary medium, and that we could not do a greater harm to foreign nations, jealous of our grandeur and our advantages, than to pass over all our silver and gold and precious stones to them. But no one was convinced of this, for the reason that permission was given to the Company of the Indies to inspect all houses, even those of royalty, and confiscate the *louis d'ors* and *écus* that were found there, leaving only twenty-sous pieces and under; and of those only enough to make change for notes and purchase the smallest commodities. All this with heavy pains and penalties if more were kept back, so that all such property had to be taken to the bank, lest the valets of the households should denounce its retention. Hence a recourse to more and more authority, which opened all houses to visits and inquisitions, to make sure that no money was concealed, while severe punishments were given to those who reserved any. Never was sovereign power so violently attempted; never did it meddle with any matter so sensitively felt or so vitally connected with the temporal well-being of the community. It was a marvel, and not the effect of any care or conduct on the part of the government, that not only ordinances so terribly novel did not produce the saddest and most complete revolution, but that there was never any question of one, and that so many millions of people, absolutely ruined or dying of hunger or want beside their own property without any means of obtaining it for their daily subsistence, should have uttered nothing but plaints and moans.

Such violence, however, was too excessive, too indefensible in various ways, to continue long; it was necessary to issue new paper and to invent fresh tricks of legerdemain, which were known to be such and felt to be such, but to which people submitted rather than not have twenty crowns in safety in their own homes. Hence came endless manœuvres, endless different aspects given to the finances, all aiming to take up one kind of paper by another, — in other words making the holders of these different papers lose in turn, they being holders by force and the bulk of the people. This is what, in the matter of finance, occupied all the rest of the regent's life and government, drove Law from the kingdom, increased the cost of all merchandise, all provisions, even the commonest, sixfold, caused a ruinous increase of all kinds of salaries, destroyed commerce, both general and private, made, at the cost of the public, the sudden wealth of a few seigneurs, who wasted it and were all the poorer in a very short time, gave monstrous fortunes to the employés and middlemen and clerks of the financiers who got their profit quickly and shrewdly out of the Mississippi. This is what still occupies the government long after the death of the Duc d'Orléans; from it France will never entirely rise, though it is true that landed property has considerably increased in value.

Forced levies to people the Mississippi.

Meantime, by dint of turning and twisting the Mississippi in every direction, that is to say, juggling the balls under that name, the idea came to them to follow the example of Englishmen and make actual settlements in those vast regions. To people them they made forced levies in Paris and all over the country of vagrants and able-bodied beggars, both men and women, and quantities of public creatures. If this had been done with wisdom, discernment, and necessary caution, the object they proposed would have been accomplished, and Paris and the provinces relieved of a heavy, useless, and sometimes dangerous burthen; but they undertook it in Paris with such violence and so much trickery in seizing whom they chose, that great disapprobation was excited. Not the slightest pains was taken to provide for the subsistence of these unfortunates on their journey, or at the places where they disembarked; they were shut up at night in barns without food, or in cellars from which they could not issue. Their cries excited both pity and indignation; but charity could not suffice to eke out the little their conductors allowed them, so that a frightful number of them died on the way. This inhumanity, added to the cruelty of the conductors, and the violent and rascally abduction of persons who were not of the class prescribed, but whom certain persons had an interest in getting rid of by saying a word in the ear and putting money in the hand of those who made the levies, caused so much indignation, expressed in terms and tones so forcible, that it was plainly seen the thing could not be carried on. Some companies had embarked; others, who had not yet started, were set free and allowed to go where they pleased, and the levies were abandoned. Law, regarded as the author of these abductions, became odious, and the Duc d'Orléans had reason to repent that he allowed himself to be dragged into permitting them.

A marriage contract produced by Law's system.

Extreme folly on one side, and immense cupidity on the other led, about this time, to the strangest marriage-contract that perhaps was ever seen. As a specimen of much that Law's system produced in France, it deserves to be mentioned here. Any one who could and who would relate the incredible bargains, the transmutation of paper, the construction of fortunes, their immensity, still more their inconceivable rapidity, and the sudden fall of most of them through luxury and mad extravagance, the ruin of the rest of the kingdom, the deep wounds it received from which it will never recover, — any one, I say, who could relate all this would make a most curious and amusing history, but at the same time the most horrible and monstrous ever known. Here, then, among other extraordinary things, is the marriage of which I speak. The contract was drawn and signed between the Marquis d'Oyse, thirty-three years old, son and younger brother of the Ducs de Villars-Brancas, and the daughter of d'Andrès, a famous Mississippian, who had made mounds of gold out of that affair; the girl was only three years old, and the agreement was to celebrate the marriage when she was twelve. The terms of the contract were six hundred thousand francs paid at once, twenty thousand francs a year till the day of the marriage, an enormous property of millions when that day came, with profuse presentations meanwhile to the Ducs de Brancas, father and son. Remarks were not wanting on this fine marriage. What will not *auri sacra fames* lead men to do? But the whole scheme miscarried before the cooking of the future wife, by Law's overthrow. The Brancas, who expected it, had got their pay well in advance, though the affair produced a lawsuit about fifteen years later, which they defended without shame, — but the Brancas were not subject to that.

How the Abbé Dubois made himself Archbishop of Cambrai.

The archbishopric of Cambrai became vacant through the death in Rome of Cardinal de la Trémoille, that is to say, the richest see and one of the grandest posts in France. The Abbé Dubois was only tonsured; one hundred and fifty thousand francs a year tempted him, and perhaps this rise might lift him more easily to the cardinalate. Impudent as he was, and great as was the empire he had assumed over his master, he was much embarrassed how to make his request. So, masking his effrontery slyly, he said to the regent that he had dreamed a pleasant dream, namely, that he had just been made the Archbishop of Cambrai. The regent, who felt to what this tended, turned on his heel and made no answer. Dubois, more and more embarrassed, stuttered and paraphrased his dream; then, rousing himself to the effort, he abruptly asked why he could not have it, as his Royal Highness had only to will it to make his fortune. The Duc d'Orléans was indignant, even shocked, little scrupulous as he was in the making of bishops, and he answered, in a tone of contempt, "What! *you* [*toi*], Archbishop of Cambrai?" — making him feel his baseness and the scandal of his life. Dubois had gone too far to stop on so fine a road, and cited him various examples. Unfortunately there were but too many, in baseness, ignorance, and low morality, — thanks to Père Tellier and the Unigenitus.

The Duc d'Orléans, less moved by such bad reasons than embarrassed how to escape the importunity of a man to whom he was now accustomed to deny nothing, tried to get out of the affair by saying: "But you are damnable; and where is the other damned fellow who would consecrate you?" "Oh! if that is all," said the abbé, hastily, "the thing is done. I know very well who will consecrate me; he is not far from here." "Who the devil is he?" asked the regent. "Who would dare to consecrate you?" "Do you want to know?" replied the abbé; "does it only depend on that?" "Who is it?" said the regent. "Your chief almoner," replied Dubois. "He is outside, and he will ask nothing better; I'll go and tell him;" and with that he clasped the knees of the regent, who stood thunderstruck without strength to refuse. Whereupon the abbé went out, pulled the Bishop of Nantes aside, told him he had Cambrai, asked him to consecrate him, obtained an instant promise, returned caracoling, told the regent he had arranged with his almoner for the consecration, thanked him, lauded him, admired him, and sealed the affair by assuming it as settled and forcing the regent, who dared not say no, — that is how Dubois made himself Archbishop of Cambrai. The extreme scandal of this appointment made a very great talk. Impudent as Dubois was, he was much embarrassed by it; and the Duc d'Orléans was so ashamed that scarcely any one ever mentioned the matter in his presence.

The Prince de Conti attacks Dubois. His consecration.

On the day when Dubois took all the orders at once the Council of Regency was held in the old Louvre, because the measles were raging in the Palais-Royal, and the regent would not go to the Tuileries. The members had all arrived, the regent also, and were standing scattered about the council-room. I was in a corner at the lower end, talking with the Prince de Conti, Maréchal Tallard, and another, whose name I forget, when I saw the Abbé Dubois enter, in a short coat and with his usual manner. We did not expect him on such a day, so that we naturally exclaimed on seeing him. This made him turn his head; on which the Prince de Conti went up to him with his father's own sneer (though it was far from having his father's grace, and was in fact cynical), spoke of his surprise at seeing the abbé there, after taking so abruptly all the orders at once, and proceeded to make him a ranting speech full of wit and malignancy in the form of a sermon, which would certainly have disconcerted any other. Dubois, unable to get in a single word, let him talk, and then answered coldly that if he were better informed about antiquity he would not find what seemed to surprise him so very strange, because he, the abbé, had only followed the example of Saint Ambroise, whose ordination he began to relate. I did not hear the tale, for as soon as I heard Saint Ambroise mentioned I fled to the other end of the room, in horror at the comparison and in fear lest I should tell him to be silent. His impious citation of Saint Ambroise went the rounds of society, with the effect that can easily be imagined. The Val-de-Grâce was chosen for the consecration, as being a royal monastery, the most magnificent in Paris, and its church the most remarkable. The building was superbly decorated; all France was invited; no one dared risk not appearing and remaining throughout the whole ceremony. Galleries with screens were put up for the foreign ambassadors and Protestant ministers. There was a gallery of great magnificence for the Duc d'Orléans and the Duc de Chartres, whom he took with him. The Duc d'Orléans entered from the monastery, and his gallery was open to every one and was filled with refreshments of every kind, which were distributed by the officers in profusion. The Duc d'Orléans gave the new archbishop a diamond of great value for his ring. The whole day was given up to a sort of triumph which drew upon it neither the approbation of man nor the blessing of God. I saw nothing of it; and never did the Duc d'Orléans and I speak of it.

Edict of the council of State; which reveals the condition of the finances.

The 22nd of May of this year became celebrated by the issuing of an edict from the council of State concerning the shares of the Company of the Indies (the Mississippi) and the notes of Law's bank. This edict diminished by degrees, and month by month, the value of the shares and notes, so that by the end of the year they would be found to have depreciated to half their value. This is called, in affairs of finance and bankruptcy, showing tail; and this decree showed it so openly that the public thought all was lost more utterly than it really was, because it was not even a remedy for impending misfortunes. The uproar was general and frightful. Every rich man thought he was ruined beyond redemption; every poor one believed himself reduced to mendicity. The parliament, inimical to the system by its own system, was careful not to lose so fine an occasion. It made itself the protector of the public by refusing to enregister the edict and by prompt and strong remonstrance. The public believed it owed to the parliament the sudden revocation of the edict, whereas it was really made in consequence of the universal groans and the tardy discovery of the fault committed. But this revocation merely showed a vain repentance for having made manifest the internal condition of Law's operations without producing a cure. The little confidence that remained was before long radically extinguished, and could never afterwards be revived.

Edict revoked; which leads to the ruin of Law.

In this state of things it was necessary to make Law a scapegoat. The regent played the comedy of not seeing him when he came by the usual door, and seeing him the following morning by the back way. Dubois, absorbed in his ecclesiastical fortune, which was now advancing towards him with rapid strides, had been duped by the edict and dared not support Law against all the world. He contented himself by remaining a neutral and useless friend, of whom Law did not dare to complain. Dubois himself was careful not to quarrel with a man from whom he had drawn such enormous sums, and who, if rendered hopeless, might tell of it; but also he was cautious not to protect him openly against a whole public at bay and exasperated. All this kept Law suspended, as it were, by the hair, having his footing nowhere, without credit or dependence, until, as we shall presently see, he was forced to yield and again seek other lands. Meantime the agency of the company was removed from the rue Quincampoix to the Place Vendôme, where it had more space and did not obstruct the streets. Those who lived in the Place Vendôme did not find it so agreeable. The king abandoned to the bank the shares for one hundred millions that he held.

The above-named decree was given and retracted during a short vacation of the Council of Regency which I spent at La Ferté. The evening before my departure I went to take leave of the Duc d'Orléans, whom I found in the little gallery with very few persons present. He took me aside with the Maréchal d'Estrées and one or two others, and told us of the decree on which he had determined. I told him that, although I knew little of finance, this step seemed to me very hazardous; that the public would never quietly see itself mulcted of half its property, more especially as it would feel no safety for the rest; that there was no sort of bad remedy that was not better than this, of which he would surely repent. It has been seen, in various places in these Memoirs, that I often spoke the truth and was not believed; and also that when results I had predicted happened they were no correction for another time. The regent replied serenely and in all security. The others present seemed to be of my opinion, though without saying much. I went away the next day, and the affair took place as I have just related.

The "Company of the Indies" made a commercial company.

Meantime another edict was proposed, to turn the Company of the Indies into a commercial company, which obliged itself, by that means, to redeem within a year six hundred millions of bank-notes, by paying off fifty millions per month. This was the last resource of Law and his system. He was forced to substitute for the legerdemain of the Mississippi something real, especially since the result of the edict of May 22, so celebrated and so fatal to his paper. The scheme now was to substitute a real Company of the Indies for past chimeras, and it was that name and that thing which took the place of what had been known previously as the Mississippi. But in vain did they give the new company the monopoly of tobacco and a great many other sources of immense revenues; they were all as nothing towards meeting the paper shed broadcast among the people, no matter what pains were taken to diminish it at all risks and at all costs.

Fatal results of that expedient.

Other expedients had to be found. This of rendering the company a commercial company was of no use whatever; it was only conferring upon it, under a specious, but obscure and vague name, the right of exclusive commerce. We can imagine how such a resolution would be received by the public, driven to extremities by the stern prohibition, under heavy penalties, of keeping more than five hundred francs in specie in their homes, which were liable to visitation and ransacking; while they themselves were forbidden to pay for the commonest necessaries of daily life in anything but bank-bills. This new scheme worked two results: first, a bitterness which grew more bitter still from the difficulty each man had of getting at his own money day by day for the daily needs of life, — and the wonder is that the disturbance calmed down and that all Paris did not revolt as one man, — and, secondly, that parliament, making a foothold of this public agitation, held firmly to the end against registering the edict, which was sent to it July 17.

On that same day, 17th, there was such a crowd about the bank and the adjacent streets to obtain, each man, the wherewithal to go to market, that ten or a dozen persons were smothered. Three of the dead bodies were tumultuously borne to the gate of the Palais-Royal, where the populace demanded an entrance with loud cries. A detachment of the king's guards was hurriedly brought up. The lieutenant of police arrived and harangued the people, whom by gentleness and cajolery he managed to disperse, getting the bodies out of the way meantime, so that by ten o'clock in the morning the affair was over. Law took it into his head to go to the Palais-Royal, and was followed through the streets with imprecations, so that the regent kept him there and gave him a lodging. He sent away his carriage, the glass of which was broken by stones; his house was attacked, and the windows of it broken in the same way. The next day an ordinance of the king was issued forbidding the people to assemble, under heavy penalties, and declaring that in consequence of the trouble of the day before at the bank, it would remain closed and no coin would be issued until order was restored. How were people to live in the meantime? Yet no disturbance occurred, which only proved the goodness and obedience of the people when put to such strange trials. Nevertheless, troops were brought in from Charenton, several regiments of cavalry and the dragoons from Saint-Denis, also the king's regiment from the heights of Chaillot. Specie was sent to Gonesse to bring in the bakers as usual, fearing that they would refuse, as did nearly all the shop-keepers and work-people in Paris, to take paper money.

Law leaves the kingdom; his end; his family.

The year ended by the sudden and secret departure of Law, who had no resources left, and whom it was now necessary to sacrifice to the public resentment. His son was with him, and they went to Brussels, thence to Liège and Germany, where he offered his talents to several princes, who declined them with thanks. After rambling about for some time, he passed through Tyrol, saw several of the Italian Courts, none of which detained him, and finally retired to Venice, where that republic made no use of him. His wife and daughter followed him some time later. Law was a Scotchman of doubtful nobility, tall and very well made, with an agreeable face and countenance, very gallant, and standing well with the women of all countries where he travelled. His wife was not his wife; she belonged to a good family in England and had followed Law for love; she had a son and a daughter by him and passed for his wife, though never married to him. This was suspected towards the end of their life in Paris, and after their departure it became certain. I don't know whether her influence was great over Law, but he always seemed full of respect and attentions to her. They were both, at the time they left France, between forty-five and fifty years old. Law left a power of attorney to settle his affairs with the grand prior of Vendôme and with Bully, who had made a great deal out of him. He had many possessions of all kinds, but, more than all, debts; so that the chaos of his affairs is not yet disentangled by a committee of the council appointed to settle with his creditors. I have said elsewhere, and I here repeat it, that there was no avarice and no knavery in his make-up. He was a gentle, kind, respectful man, whom inordinate influence and fortune had never spoiled, and whose behaviour, equipments, table, and furniture could never shock any one. He endured with patience and singular consistency the obstacles placed in his way to thwart his operations, until quite the end, when, finding himself cut short of means while striving and desiring to meet his obligations, he became irritable, ill-humour seized him, and his answers were often incautious. He was a man of system, calculation, comparison, thoroughly and deeply informed on that line. Without ever cheating, he had won enormously at play, by dint of possessing, to a degree that seems to me incredible, the faculty of combination of cards.

His bank, as I have said elsewhere, would have been an excellent thing in a republic, or in a country like England, where finance is essentially in a republic. As for his Mississippi, he was the dupe of it; he believed in good faith that he could really make great and rich settlements in America. He reasoned like an Englishman, and ignored how contrary to commerce and such enterprises is the volatility of this nation, its inexperience, its eagerness to get rich of a sudden, the impediments of a despotic government which lays its hand on everything and has little or no continuity — for what is done by one minister is destroyed or changed by his successor. Law's proscription of specie, then of jewels, in order to have none but paper money in France is a system that I have never understood, nor any one else, as I think, from the days of Abraham down. But Law was a man of systems, and so profound that one did not understand him; though he was by nature clear, with a fluent elocution, which had, however, a good deal of English in its French. He resided several years in Venice on very small means, and died there, a Catholic, — having lived honestly, soberly, and modestly, though poorly, receiving piously the sacraments of the Church.

After these changes in the ministry of finance, everything remained for a time inactive, and this, joined to a total want of confidence, destroyed completely the credit of the king, and left the fortunes of individuals in a state of extreme uncertainty. All business of this kind went on between the regent and La Houssaye, the new controller-general, who, in addition to the general chaos of the finances, found no registers, no sources of knowledge of any kind, nor any person to give any, because with Law fell those he had employed. Circulation was paralyzed; exhaustion and confusion reigned to a degree that is difficult to imagine. No one was ignorant in the main of the disorder of the finances, but when [after a report made to a Council of Regency at which the facts were clearly stated] the details of fictitious millions became known, bringing ruin to the king and to private individuals, the nation was terrified. It was then seen plainly to what this jugglery, by which all France had been seduced, had led, and what had been the prodigality of the regent, led on by the facility of coining money with paper and thus misleading the public greed. A remedy had to be found; for things had now arrived at their worst; and this remedy, which must result in fatal detriment to the holders of shares in the company and bank-notes, could only be found by exposing the whole evil, so long concealed as far as it was possible to do so, in order that each man should see where he really stood. Added to this pressing necessity was the difficulty of finding any remedy at all.

After the edict of the 22nd of May, which was the epoch of the fall of what had been known as the Mississippi and the Bank, and the loss of public confidence by the sad revelation that there was not real money enough to meet the notes, because of the enormous output of the latter beyond the amount of coin, every step had been a stumble, every operation a palliative, and a feeble one. They had only sought to gain days and weeks, in the darkness they intentionally thickened from the dread they had of letting the light in upon so much seduction and such horrors of public ruin. Law could not cleanse himself before the world of having been its inventor and its instrument, and he would have run great risk had he still been here at the final moment of this terrible unveiling. The regent, to gratify his natural pliancy and prodigality and to satisfy the inordinate greed of those about him, had forced Law's hand and stripped him of millions of notes far beyond all means of ever meeting them. He now found himself brought to a stand and compelled to show in the light of day the state of the finances, and the management of that enormous enterprise which was all deception.

X.

Declaration for receiving the bull Unigenitus read at the Council.

THE Abbé Dubois, who thought of nothing but how to facilitate his promotion to the cardinalate, and who sacrificed to that object the State, the regent, and everything else, did it so surely that we were taken by surprise at a Council of Regency when the chancellor, pulling out of his pocket the letters-patent for the acceptance of the bull Unigenitus, read them by order of the regent, who did not take the votes, for which I was as glad as I was astonished. This novel method of dispensing with votes struck everybody, and marked very plainly that they would not have been in favour of the declaration, and also the trickery and violence of boldly assuming approval under the certainty that no one would venture to object. This was a grand merit which Dubois acquired with the Jesuits and the whole cabal of the bull.

Parliament refuses to enregister it.

Parliament, however, would not enregister the king's declaration for this acceptance, and Dubois, anxious about the interests of his hat and desirous of giving brilliant proofs of his zeal to Rome and the Jesuits, made the regent resolve to have the document enregistered by the Grand Council, to which, in order to avoid the obstacles he feared, the regent was to go himself, and take with him all the princes of the blood, the peers, and the marshals of France; because at this tribunal all the officers of the crown have a seat and a deliberating voice; which is different from the parliaments, where they have no vote unless the king is present and takes them with him.

Arriving at the Palais-Royal from Meudon one morning, I found the Duc d'Orléans alone in his great apartment, giving orders to the red waiters to go round and notify all these gentlemen for the next morning. I had been kept in ignorance of what was going on, for Dubois was afraid that I should make the thing miss fire by convincing the regent of the weakness and indecency of such a solemn step, so novel and so useless. I therefore asked the Duc d'Orléans what it was all about. He told me, and then stretching his arms towards me and smiling, he begged me not to go to the Council. I began to laugh, and told him he could not give me a more agreeable order or one that I should execute more willingly, because it spared me the pain of rising publicly against his wishes and arguing with all my strength against them. He said he knew that very well, and that was why he begged me not to be present. Though the thing was done, I did not refrain from telling him in two words that he was being made to commit a great blunder, by advertising his perfect powerlessness to make a valid registration *in loco majorum* before that tribunal; for the Grand Council and all tribunals non-parliamentary have only powers within their own jurisdiction, and none at all over public matters in general. I contented myself with these few words, for there was no hope of breaking a plan so far advanced and about to be executed the next morning; above all, one that Dubois regarded as his own most vital affair. I finished the work I had to do with the regent and went back to Meudon, grieved at what they were making him do, but much comforted at being released, without having asked it, from the necessity of attending the Council.

The affair did not take place without creating a stir. Several magistrates at the Grand Council gave their opinion against the declaration with intelligence, force, and breadth, and were not discomfited by sundry interruptions made by the regent, whom they answered respectfully, but with arguments and nerve; and it was shown on the count of votes that the matter was carried by the votes of the peers and marshals, who, with very few of the magistrates of the Grand Council, made a majority. I heard that my absence was much remarked upon, and some persons sent to the courtyard to see if my carriage was there. I dare not say that people applauded my absence and that Dubois was very angry, for he never spoke to me about it, but I think he was much surprised when he heard from the Duc d'Orléans that it was he himself who asked me to stay away. The result was just what I predicted. People scoffed at the proceeding and the show; regarding it as a useless piece of cowardice, an avowal of weakness, a cringing to Rome. No one mistook the selfish motive of Dubois, nor did any one, beginning with the Grand Council itself, regard the registration as having the slightest force or authority in the kingdom.

The regent carries the matter to the Grand Council.

Nullity of that registration.

Philippe de Courcillon, called the Marquis de Dangeau, died in Paris, at eighty-four years of age, September 7, — a harmless sort of personage, about whom curiosity apropos of his singular Memoirs may require me to say a few words here. He was a tall man, very well made, grown stout with age, having an always pleasant face, which gave a promise, and kept it, of an insipidity that turned one's stomach. He had no means, or very little; he applied himself to learn perfectly all the games that were played in those days, — piquet, bête, hombre, great and little prime, hoc, reversis, brelan, — and to study the combinations of games and cards, until he possessed them so thoroughly as scarcely ever to be mistaken even at

Death, fortune, character, family, and Memoirs of Dangeau.

lansquenet and bassette, judging them accurately and staking on those he believed would win. Such knowledge won him much; and his gains put him in the way of introducing himself into good houses and, little by little, at Court. He was soft, obliging, flattering, with the air and tone and manners of society, prompt and excellent at cards, where, no matter how great his gains (and they certainly were the basis and the means of his fortune), he was never suspected, and his reputation was always clean and intact. The necessity of finding heavy players for the game of the king and Mme. de Montespan admitted him to their table; and it was of him, when fully initiated, that Mme. de Montespan said merrily that no one could help liking him and laughing at him; which was perfectly true. People liked him because nothing ever escaped him against any one; he was kindly, accommodating, reliable in his dealings, a very honest man, obliging, honourable, but otherwise so flat, so insipid, such an admirer of nothings, — provided such nothings related to the king or to persons in place and favour, — so grovelling an adulator of the same, and, after his rise, so puffed-up with pride and silliness and so occupied with exhibiting and making the most of his pretended distinctions, that no one could keep himself from laughing at him.

With little wit, but what he had of the great world, the result of being always in good society, he allowed himself at times to scribble verses. The king had a fancy at one time for *bout-rimés.* Dangeau was ardently desirous of a lodging at Versailles, when lodgings were scarce, in the early times when the king went to live there. One day, when he was playing at cards with Mme. de Montespan, Dangeau sighed pathetically in speaking to some one of this desire, but loud enough for the king and Mme. de Montespan to overhear him. They did so, and diverted themselves accordingly; then, finding it very amusing to keep Dangeau on the gridiron, they invented the strangest rhymes they could imagine and gave them to him, feeling quite sure he could do nothing with them, but promising him a lodging if he managed to compose them without leaving the game, and before it ended. It turned out that the parties duped were the king and Mme. de Montespan. The muses favoured Dangeau; he won his lodging and received it immediately.

He had married in 1632 a rich girl, daughter of a collector of taxes called Morin the Jew. Being left a widower, he found himself rich enough to remarry with a Comtesse Lœvenstein, maid-of-honour to Mme. la Dauphine, and niece of Cardinal de Fürstemberg, who had several sisters very grandly married in Germany, and brothers in high positions. We have seen elsewhere who the Lœvensteins were, and what a fuss Madame made on seeing the arms palatine quartered with those of Courcillon on Mme. Dangeau's sedan-chair. 'T was a pleasure to see with what delight Dangeau strutted about in deep mourning for his wife's relations, and told of their grandeur. At last, by dint of veneering himself with this one and that one, behold a seigneur, affecting all the manners of the same enough to make one die of laughing; for did not Bruyère say, in his excellent "Characters of Theophrastus," that Dangeau was not a seigneur, but after a seigneur?

From the time he first came to Court, that is, about the period of the death of the queen-mother, he began to write in a journal the news of the day, and he was faithful to the work until he died. He wrote them like a gazette, without any comments, so that one reads of events with exact dates and not one word of their causes, still less of any intrigues or any sort of emotion, either at Court or among private persons. The servility of a humble courtier, the worship of a master, and of all that is or smells of favour, the silliest and most miserable praise, eternal and suffocating incense, even about the most indifferent actions of the king, of Mme. de Maintenon, of the ministers, all that the king did each day, often the actions of the princes and the most influential ministers, are there written down dryly as to facts, but as much as possible with servile flattery, and for things that no other than himself would have dreamed of lauding. It is difficult to understand how a man could have had the patience and perseverance to write such a work every day of his life for fifty years, — so meagre, so dry, so constrained, so cautious, so literal; writing nothing but a mere shell, of repulsive aridity. It must be owned, however, that it would have been difficult for Dangeau to have written real memoirs requiring insight into the various machinations of a Court. Dangeau had a mind below mediocrity, very frivolous, very incapable in every way, taking readily the shadow for the substance, living on gas, and perfectly contented with it. All his capacities went solely to behave himself properly, to hurt no one, to acquire, preserve, and enjoy a sort of consideration; without ever perceiving that, beginning from the king down, his silliness and conceit diverted the company, and that traps were laid for him in those directions, into which he tumbled headlong. But with all that, his memoirs are full of facts about which the gazettes are silent; they will gain much by age, and will greatly help those who wish to write correctly, through the accuracy of their chronology, and the confusion that this will assist such writers to avoid.

For a long time past the Abbé Dubois had shut the mouth of his master towards me, especially on the matter of foreign affairs. This did not prevent a few scraps escaping the Duc d'Orléans when we were alone together, but with very little detail and connection; and I was always, for my part, extremely reserved. But one day, early in June, I found him alone, walking up and down the large apartment. As soon as he saw me he grasped me by the hand, exclaiming: "Ho *çà!* I can't keep the thing I most desired in the world a secret from you, — a most important thing for me, and one you will equally rejoice in; but *you* must keep it the greatest secret." And then he added, laughing: "If M. de Cambrai knew that I told you he would never forgive me." After which he informed me of his reconciliation with the King and Queen of Spain, the marriage of the king to the infanta as soon as she was marriageable, and that of the Prince of the Asturias to his own daughter, Mlle. de Montpensier.

1721.
The regent confides to me the marriage of the king with the infanta.

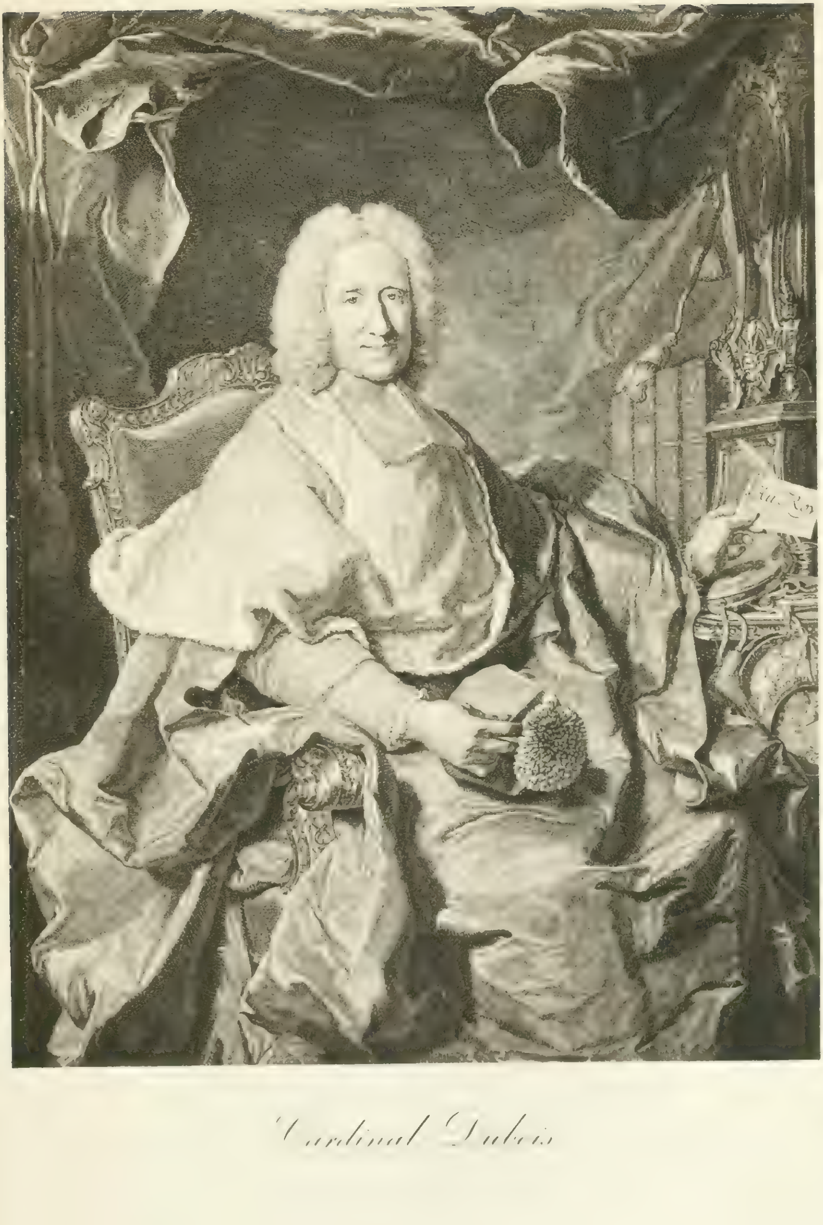
Though my joy was great, my astonishment surpassed it. The Duc d'Orléans embraced me, and after the first reflections on the personal advantages to him in so great an affair, I asked him how he had managed to bring it about, especially as to the marriage of his daughter. He said it was done in a twinkling, for the Abbé Dubois was the devil and all if he really wanted a thing; that the King of Spain had been so enchanted at the request of the king, his nephew, for the infanta, that they had made the marriage of the Prince of the Asturias a *sine qua non* condition of that of the infanta, which forced the hand of the King of Spain in spite of himself. After we had talked it well over and greatly rejoiced, I told him that the marriage of his daughter ought to be kept secret till the very moment of her departure, and that of the king until years would permit of its celebration, so as to prevent the jealousy of all Europe at this close union of the two branches of the Royal House, — a union which had always been its terror, as disunion was its hope, and the constant object of its policy; for which reason it was best to leave the world ignorant as long as possible, as the infanta was only three years old, being born in Madrid on March 30th, 1718; the Prince of the Asturias, born in August, 1707, was fourteen, and Mlle. de Montpensier twelve. "You are quite right," replied the Duc d'Orléans, "but it can't be done, because in Spain they wish the declaration made at once, and the infanta sent here the moment the proposal is made and the marriage-contract signed." "What folly!" I cried; "why sound such a tocsin to set all Europe in a ferment? You ought to make them understand that, and be firm about it; nothing is more important." "That is true," said the Duc d'Orléans. "I think just as you do, but they are so headstrong in Spain they *would* have it so, and I had to agree. The thing is settled, done, decided; the affair is so important for me, in every respect, that you never could advise me to break it off for such a whim." I agreed, shrugging my shoulders with impatience at such perverse ill-luck.

I obtain the embassy to Spain.

While we had been talking the matter over, I had thought about my own affairs and the occasion so naturally presenting itself of making the future of my second son. I said therefore to the regent that, inasmuch as matters had necessarily come to the point he mentioned, it became important to send at once and make a solemn demand for the infanta and sign the marriage-contract; that for such a purpose a seigneur of mark and high rank was needed, and I begged him to give that embassy to me, with his protection and recommendation to the King of Spain to make my second son, the Marquis de Ruffec, a grandee of Spain. I said: "I ask for him a thing that does not interfere with any one, that gives him the rank and honours of a duke, and is the natural result of an embassy sent to make a marriage for the king. No one could fail to approve of your giving me the mission with a view to the grandeeship." The Duc d'Orléans would hardly let me finish; he granted my request at once, promised to do all in his power to obtain the rank for the Marquis de Ruffec, seasoned his promise with much friendship, and asked me for absolute secrecy, and to let none of my preparations be visible until he should tell me to make them. I understood very well that, besides the secrecy of the affair, he wanted time to coax his Dubois and make him swallow the pill. My thanks being made, I asked him two favours: one was, not to give me any salary as an ambassador, but enough in bulk for an outfit to save me from being ruined; and the other was, not to charge me with any other affairs, because I did not wish to quit him or take root in Spain, where I wished to go solely for my second son and to return immediately. The fact was I feared that Dubois would keep me there in exile in order to be rid of me here, and I saw later as things turned out that my precaution was not useless. The Duc d'Orléans granted both requests, with many obliging assurances that he hoped my absence would not be long. I thought I had done a great affair for my family, and I went home very content; but, good God! what are the plans and successes of men?

Dubois a cardinal at last. His conduct on the occasion.

As time went by after the accession of the new pope, Dubois' impatience gave him no rest. He was stunned when he heard that the pope had made one cardinal all alone on the 16th of June,—his brother, the Bishop of Terracina, a Benedictine monk of Monte Cassini. Dubois, expecting that no promotion would be made unless he were of it, breathed fire and slaughter. But he did not wait long. A month later, July 16, saw him cardinal, together with Don Alessandro Albano,



Cardinal Dubois

nephew of the late pope and brother of the cardinal-camerlingo. Dubois received the news and the compliments with infinite joy; but he knew enough to contain himself with some decency and to give all the honour of his elevation to the Duc d'Orléans, who had little or no part in it. But he could not help telling everybody that what honoured him more than even the Roman purple itself was the unanimous desire and eagerness of all the powers to procure it for him. He exhaled himself on that, and never stopped talking of it, but no one was duped in that way.

Though he and I were on the terms I have shown, I thought I ought to put the regent at his ease between Dubois and me, as I was forced to have a certain necessary intercourse with him during my embassy. I therefore went to call upon him; whereupon he overwhelmed me with respects, compliments, protestations of gratitude for the honour I did him, with no word of the past. Though the visit was one of ceremony and there was much company, he used his red hat (which he had just received from the hands of the king) as if it were a black one, tossed it aside like dirt to offer me his hand, and conducted me at parting to the very end of his apartment and even to the courtyard on which it opened. The Duc d'Orléans expressed to me his pleasure at this act on my part, and after that I never met the new cardinal in the regent's apartments that he did not come to me and, stepping backward from the door, perform marvels; in which I took good care to put no confidence. On receiving his hat from the king he took off from his neck his episcopal cross and presented it to the Bishop of Fréjus who was standing near, telling him that it brought good luck, and for that reason he begged him to wear it for his sake. Fréjus reddened and received it with much embarrassment. This cross, though

His pectoral cross; embarrassment of M. de Frejus.

shaped like all others, was very peculiar in workmanship, which made it perfectly distinguishable; but Fréjus, liable to meet the cardinal continually in the king's presence, dared not avoid wearing it. He was dining one day, with the cross on his neck, at the Duchesse du Lude's, with M. and Mme. de Torcy and a large company, when Mme. de Torcy, who did not like Dubois and was much displeased with Fréjus' conduct about the bull and whatever was charged with Jansenism, accustomed, moreover, to see him in earlier years a parasite and hanger-on of her family, attacked his cross at table with a good deal of wit, freedom, and bitterness, falling foul of the pair with stinging sharpness, and putting Fréjus so beside himself that he did not know where he was; while the company, who saw and regretted such a scene at table, tried in vain to call the dogs off the hunt, which lasted a long time and was never forgiven by Fleury, either to Mme. de Torcy or her husband, who really had nothing to do with it. Torcy himself was much too wise and cautious, and truly it was a great imprudence in his wife.

Conduct of Fréjus to the king, the regent, Villeroy, and the world.

Fréjus, intent on the future, but the future of this world, thought of nothing so much as attaching the king to himself, in which he was making great and very visible progress. Although in his heart opposed to the regent, he behaved to him always with the utmost circumspection, and in cultivating the opposite party he did it with caution. Maréchal de Villeroy was the *coryphée* of that party. He was the object of Fleury's most jealous attention. The latter dreaded his grandeur, which he regarded as fatal to his own project of gaining possession of the king with an authority to be shared by no one; he felt the disproportion of the maréchal to himself, and he was personally hampered by all that he owed him of attachment and gratitude. It was not yet time to relieve himself of those bonds, but he was careful not to increase them by serving, or by encouraging against the government and person of the Duc d'Orléans, a party timid at heart, badly organized for action, depressed by the blows it had received, but full of an ardent will; a party which, if it could only have counted on the king through Fréjus, would soon have recovered strength and courage. But in that case the principal fruit would have been gathered by Villeroy, from his place beside the king, which was far from the interest or the intention of Fréjus, who was toiling from afar to become sole master, and regarded the ruin of the maréchal in the king's mind as essential to the great position which he meditated gaining for himself.

His progress in the king's affections was so visible that he was rapidly becoming a personage whom every one thought it was well to conciliate. If he felt the superiority of rank and position which Villeroy held over him, much more did he feel that of the Duc d'Orléans, the weight of his birth, place, talents, age, all of which would naturally continue his authority for thirty years after the close of his regency. Moreover, the regent, having removed the Duc du Maine from his duties to the king, might also remove him, without the slightest fear of exciting opposition, and thus destroy his hopes and plans forever. It was this that restrained him towards the regent within proper bounds; it was this that led him to cultivate me with so much care and the outside husk of confidence, — because I was the only person in close relations with the regent whom a bishop, anxious to exhibit the virtues and behaviour of his calling (from which he drew great benefit eventually), could frequent on a footing of personal intimacy.

It was this also that redoubled his sedulous care and activity in attaching the king to him more and more, so as to make, if possible, a sure buckler of the king's affection should the regent at any future time take a fancy to dismiss him. I saw clearly the whole manœuvre, and I tried to rouse the negligent indifference of the Duc d'Orléans. I told him how important it was to keep on good terms and treat wisely the only man for whom the king showed friendliness and confidence, for he was inwardly more than alienated from the Maréchal de Villeroy. I must here admit that Fréjus was never self-interested. After all things were in his power, he took no benefice whatever for himself, and it has never appeared that he made himself any other form of compensation. At the very height of his omnipotence and his cardinalate, his household, his equipments, his table, his furniture, were always inferior to those of the middle-class prelates.

My embassy announced. The Duc de Lauzun's advice.

As soon as the marriages were declared I urged that my embassy should be announced, in order that I might work at my outfit. This had been expressly forbidden to me so far, and with good reason, to excite no comment; but that reason ceasing with the declaration of the marriages, and time pressing, I wanted to begin my preparations. The Duc de Lauzun urged me very strongly to ask for the *cordon bleu* [Order of the Holy Spirit] as a proper decoration to wear in Spain, and which, being a favour here, would not stand in the way of my obtaining in Spain what I desired for my children. But I would not do so. This impatience to wear the Order, which must in time be mine, was repugnant to me. I had only desired this embassy for the sake of making my second son a grandee of Spain, and, if occasion offered, to obtain the Order of the Golden Fleece for the eldest. To succeed in that and to get the *cordon bleu* at the same time seemed to me too greedy a piling up of favours; and I did not allow myself to be tempted. Whoever had told me then that I should not be included in the next promotion would have surprised me very much; but whoso had added that I should find myself one of eight with Cellamare, two sons of the Duc du Maine, and the Duc de Richelieu, in the following promotion would have amazed me far more.

My suite; I leave Paris for Madrid.

Cardinal Dubois hastened my departure eagerly, and, in truth, there was no time to lose. He even sent constantly to hasten the workmen engaged in preparing my outfit; he wanted to see the liveries of every sort of servant, and insisted on making them very magnificent; he also had all the suits made for myself and my sons taken to him to see. He asked for the names of my suite, and exhorted me to make it a large one. I took with me the Comte de Lorges, the Comte de Céreste, my two sons, the Abbé de Saint-Simon, his brother, the major of a regiment that had served in Spain and was well-known there, an officer of great distinction who was infinitely useful to me, the Abbé de Mathan, a friend of the Abbé de Saint-Simon, whom I took for his health, and who has since continued to be my friend also. The Comte de Céreste was a friend of my sons. He wanted to make the journey, and I felt in honour bound to him. He and I made great acquaintance on the way. I found him a young man who was fully a man, and one who was equally agreeable and solid. Esteem formed a friendship between us which has lasted intimately ever since. On the eve of my departure I received my letters from the king and the regent to their Catholic Majesties, the dowager queen at Bayonne, and the Prince of the Asturias.

I left Paris with post-horses, Oct. 23, 1721, with part of my suite, the rest of the company joining me at Blaye. As I crossed the Pyrenees and quitted France I also quitted the rain and the rough weather which had followed us till then, and found a cloudless sky and a charming temperature, with points of view and perspectives, changing continually, that were no less charming. We were all mounted on mules, the pace of which is long and easy. I turned aside in crossing the highest mountain to visit Loyola, the famous birthplace of Saint Ignatius. It stands alone, beside a rather wide brook in a narrow valley, squeezed on both sides by rocky mountains, which must make it a glacier when covered with snow, and a pudding dish in summer. We found there four or five Jesuits, very polite and intelligent men, who are in charge of a monstrous building they are erecting for over a hundred Jesuits and an infinite number of scholars, with the intention of making this house a novitiate, a college, and a house for postulants, to serve, in short, for all the purposes to which they put their various houses, and to be, as it were, the capital of their Company. They showed us the primitive little home of the father of Saint Ignatius, a small house with five or six windows, which has only a ground-floor for the housework, a floor above, and over that a garret. It would be, at most, the lodging of a curate, and has nothing resembling a château about it. We saw the chamber where Saint Ignatius, wounded in war, lay for a long time and had his famous revelation about the Company of which he was to be the founder; also the stable where his mother chose to give birth to him out of devotion to the stable in Bethlehem; this stable is under the house. Nothing could be lower, narrower, more confined than these two places; nothing more dazzling than the gold that shines everywhere about

Passage of the Pyrenees. I go to see Loyola.

them. In each there is an altar bearing the Holy Sacrament, and both altars are of the utmost magnificence.

The Jesuits' own house, which they are going to pull down for their enormous building, is a very small affair, only fit to lodge about a dozen of them. The new church is nearly finished. It is a rotunda, of surprising size and height, with lofty altars all around it placed symmetrically. Gold, painting, sculpture, ornaments of all sorts and the very richest, are spread about everywhere with amazing but judicious art. The architecture is correct and wonderful, the marbles exquisite, — jasper, porphyry, lapis-lazuli, — the columns are plain, twisted, fluted, with capitals and decorations in gilded bronze. A row of balconies are between each altar, with little stairways of marble leading to them, and the inlaid lattices, the altars, and all that accompanies them are wonderful. In a word, this is one of the most superb edifices in Europe, the best arranged and the most gorgeously decorated. We drank the best chocolate I ever tasted in this place, and after several hours of curiosity and admiration we regained our route and our night's lodging, very late, and with much difficulty.

I started from Burgos on the 19th, finding few relays and those very poor ones, and travelled night and day without sleeping anywhere, and chiefly in the carriages of the magistrates of the towns, until we reached Madrid; the last dozen leagues we were forced to make on horseback. We arrived in this way at Madrid Friday, 21st, at eleven at night, and found at the entrance of the city, which has neither walls nor gates nor barriers nor suburbs, a number of men on guard, who asked us who we were and whence we came; they were posted there to watch for my arrival and give notice of it. As I was very tired, having travelled from Burgos without stopping, and it was very late, I answered that we were the people of the French ambassador, who would arrive the next day.

Arrival in Madrid.

The next day, Saturday, 22nd, very early, I sent my secretary to the Marquis de Grimaldo, secretary of the king, also the other customary messages on arrival to the ministers of foreign courts. Grimaldo, surprised and very glad at my arrival, which he did not expect until the evening of this day, hurried to the palace to tell their Catholic Majesties, who, disliking their residence in Madrid, were impatiently awaiting my coming in order to start for Lerma. From the palace Grimaldo came to me, instead of waiting for my first visit, and found me with Maulevrier [French ambassador at the court of Spain], the Duc de Liria, and some others. Grimaldo expressed to me the joy of their Catholic Majesties at my arrival, and after making me the most graceful compliments on his own behalf, he gave me my choice whether to go and make my bow to them that same morning or wait till the afternoon. I thought eagerness was more becoming; and I went with him at once in Maulevrier's carriage. In this way all the difficulties of a first visit were avoided in regard to those to whom it was due on my part, which relieved me very much.

I make my first bow to their Catholic Majesties.

We arrived at the palace as the king was returning from mass, and we awaited him in the little salon between the Salon of the Grandees and the Salon of Mirrors. In a few moments the king entered and came to me at once, preceded and followed by a good many courtiers, but nothing like the crowd of ours. I made a profound bow; he expressed his joy at my arrival, asked news of the king, the Duc d'Orléans, and about my journey; after which he went alone into the Salon of Mirrors. In a moment I was surrounded by the whole Court, with compliments and assurances of joy at the marriages and the union of the two crowns. Grimaldo and the Duc de Liria named the seigneurs, who all spoke French, and I endeavoured to reply to their civilities by mine.

In half a quarter of an hour after the king had retired he sent for me. I entered alone into the Salon of Mirrors, which is very vast, but much less wide than long. The king, and the queen on his left, were standing at the other end, almost touching each other. I approached, with three profound bows. My audience lasted half an hour, during which they expressed their joy, their desires, their impatience, with great effusion about the Duc d'Orléans, and their desire to make Mlle. de Montpensier happy. At the close of the conversation, in which the queen talked a great deal more than the king, though he showed his joy as plainly, they did me the honour to say that they wished to show me the infants, and ordered me to follow them. I have never seen prettier children nor better made than Don Ferdinand and Don Carlos, nor a finer babe than Don Philippe. The king and queen took pleasure in making them turn about and walk before me with very good grace. After which we entered the room of the infanta, where I endeavoured to display all the gallantry that I could. She was really charming, with a sensible little air, and not at all embarrassed. The queen remarked that the infanta was beginning to speak French pretty well; to which the king added that she would soon forget Spain. "Oh!" cried the queen, "not only Spain, but the king and me, to attach herself the more to the king, her husband;" on which I did my best not to be mute. A few moments later the king called me to see the Prince of the Asturias, who was still in the Salon of Mirrors. I found him tall, and truly a picture; fair, with beautiful blond hair, a white skin with much colour, a long but agreeable face, fine eyes, though rather too near the nose, and with plenty of grace and politeness. He asked with interest for news of the king, the Duc d'Orléans, and Mlle. de Montpensier, and the time of her arrival.

Sketch of the King of Spain.

The first sight of the King of Spain, after I had made my bow to him, astonished me so much that I had need to gather myself together to recover from it. I could see no vestige of the former Duc d'Anjou in that changed and elongated face, which told even less than it did when he left France. He was much bent, and shortened; his chin was thrust forward very far from his chest; the feet straight, touching each other and interfering as he walked, though he walked quickly with his knees a foot apart. What he did me the honour to say was well said, but the words were so drawling, his air so silly, that I was quite confounded. A tight body coat, without any kind of gold lace, and made of a sort of brown drugget because he was intending to hunt, did not improve either his looks or his bearing. He wore a tied wig, thrown behind his head, the *cordon bleu* over his coat, — this at all times and everywhere, — so that the Golden Fleece, which he wore round his throat on a red ribbon, could scarcely be seen, because his cravat and chin and the *cordon bleu* concealed it.

But though I was surprised at this first sight of the King of Spain, I must say, with the most exact and literal truth, that later, on my formal demand for the infanta in marriage, his answers surprised me equally. They were made to each point of my discourse in their proper order, with dignity, grace, and even majesty, and especially with a surprising choice of expressions, and words so appropriate and so judiciously and accurately measured out that I seemed to hear the late king, that master of such replies and so well versed in making them. Philippe V. was not born with superior intellect, nor with anything of what is called imagination. He was cold, silent, sad, sober, open to no pleasure but that of hunting, fearing society, fearing himself, solitary and secluded by choice and habit, rarely touched by others; with good sense, nevertheless, and an upright nature, comprehending things fairly well, obstinate when he set himself to will a thing, and at such times impossible to change, but otherwise perfectly easy to lead and govern.

He felt little. In his campaigns he stayed where they put him; if it was under fire he was not the least shaken, and amused himself with watching if others were afraid. Under cover and far from danger he was just the same, without considering whether or not his fame would suffer. On the whole he liked to make war, though still with the same indifference as to whether he went or not, whether he was present or absent, leaving to his generals the whole command, without ever putting in a word of his own. He was extremely conceited, and would not tolerate the slightest resistance to any of his enterprises; and what made me think that he loved praise was that the queen praised him incessantly, even about his face; asking me one day before him if I did not think him very handsome, handsomer than any man I knew. His piety was only custom, scruples, terrors, small observances, without knowing anything whatever of religion; the pope was a divinity when he did not oppose him; in that, a shallow imitation of the Jesuits, whom he passionately admired. Though his health was good, he was always feeling himself over, and uneasy about it. A physician like the one whom Louis XI. enriched at the close of his life, another Maître Coyctier, would soon have become a rich and powerful personage; happily, the one whom Philippe V. employed was a man of worth and honour, and his successor was wholly devoted to the queen and kept in order by her.

It was not so much the difficulty of speaking well as laziness and distrust of himself that made the king silent. He rarely took part in the conversation, which he let the queen hold with those who followed them on the Mall or saw them in private audiences; he also left her to talk with this one and that one in passing, scarcely ever saying anything himself. Yet he was the man of all others who took most note of defects and absurdities, and would make the best and most amusing story of them. I have said with what dignity and appropriateness he replied to my speech at the formal audience, and what discriminating words he used about the marriages, which shows that he could express himself perfectly when he chose, though he seldom took the pains to do so. Towards the end of my stay, after I had made him familiar with me at my private audiences, which always turned into conversations, I heard him talk and reason well on several occasions; but whenever there were people present he usually said a mere word to me, a short question or something of the kind, and never entered into any conversation.

He was kind, easy to serve, familiar with his interior household, and sometimes with certain seigneurs. Love of France issued from every pore of him. He retained great reverence and gratitude for the late king, and tenderness for the late Monseigneur, and, above all, for Mgr. the Dauphin, his brother, for whose loss he was never consoled. I did not remark an interest in any other of the royal family except the present king, and he made no inquiry about any one belonging to the Court with the sole exception of the Duchesse de Beauvilliers, and as to her with friendship.

The queen alarmed me with a face that was scarred, seamed, and excessively disfigured by the small-pox. The garments then in fashion for the Spanish ladies, invented

Sketch of the Queen of Spain.

by the Princesse des Ursins and totally different from their former style, is as favourable to young and well-made women as it is distressing in those whose defects of age and figure it reveals. The queen was extremely well-made, though slender; her neck and shoulders beautiful, rather full and very white, as were the hands and arms; her figure easy, the waist long and extremely tapering. She spoke French very well with a slight Italian accent, in good language, choice but not studied, her voice and enunciation most agreeable. A charming, continual, and natural grace without the slightest affectation accompanied her words and her countenance, varying as they varied. She united an air of kindness, even courtesy and amiable familiarity, with one of grandeur and majesty which never left her. From this mixture it resulted that when one had the honour of seeing her in some privacy (though always with the king), one was readily at ease with her, without forgetting who she was, and quickly accustomed to her face. In fact, after seeing her for a while, one could easily distinguish that she must have had beauty and charm, the idea of which that cruel small-pox had not wholly effaced. I must add here that night and day, in work, audiences, amusements, devotions, she and the king were never parted for a single instant, except for formal audiences which they gave separately.

The queen [Elizabeth Farnese] was brought up very harshly in a garret of the palace in Parma by the duchess her mother, who had never let her see life until after the proposal of her amazing marriage; and then as little as she could, and always under her own eyes. The princess was born with a good mind and all the natural graces that the mind knows how to govern. Sense, reflection, behaviour made use of her intelligence and employed it pertinently, drawing from its graces all that it had to give. She felt her talents and her forces, but without that pride and vanity of display which would have weakened them or made them ridiculous. Her ways were simple, unaffected; sometimes a natural gayety sparkled across and through the everlasting tedium of her life; and though she had temper and sometimes sharpness, which this unrelaxed constraint had given her, she was really a woman who pretended to nothing in the ordinary current of her life, where she was truly charming.

On arriving in Spain, sure of dismissing the Princesse des Ursins and fully intending to take her place in the government, she grasped the reins at once and did it so well, seizing at the same time the mind of the king, that she soon ruled the one and the other. In public matters nothing could be hidden from her. The king never worked except in her presence. All that reached him she read and reasoned over with him. She was present at all private audiences, whether of his subjects or of foreign ministers, so that nothing escaped her with regard to business or favours. With regard to the king, this eternal *tête-à-tête* which day and night she had with him gave her every means of knowing him, and knowing him, as one might say, by heart. Nothing could equal the shrewd and clever turns she knew well how to give to things, and the wily way she could make the king take them, and, little by little, assume her likings and aversions. Rarely did she go to her point; her way was by long preparations, turns and counter-turns, compass in hand, and feeling the wind of the king's humour, which she had long had time to know and could not mistake. Her praises, flatteries, compliances were perpetual; never was the ennui, the terrible weight of the burden allowed to be seen.

And yet her life was cramped and agitated beyond what any one could imagine; and however great her power was, she owed it to such art, suppleness, patience, strategy, that it is not too much to say that, great as it was, she paid too dearly for it. But she was so lively, so active, so decided, so resolute, so vehement in her desires, her interests were so dear to her and seemed to her so great, that nothing cost her anything to attain her ends. Sometimes the chain was drawn so tightly that she could never, for one instant, leave the left side of the king. I have seen her several times when walking on the Mall and excited and interested by some tale or conversation, walk a little slower than the king and so lag four or five steps behind him; the king would then look back, and instantly she would regain his side in two jumps, and there continue the conversation with the seigneurs who followed her, and I with them, regaining in the same hasty way the ground we had lost.

Hunting the daily pleasure of the king.

Hunting was the daily pleasure of the king, and therefore it was forced to be that of the queen. But it was always invariably the same. Their Catholic Majesties did me the honour, a very unusual one, of commanding me to be present at one of these hunts; and I went in my carriage. So I saw it well; and whoso sees one sees all. The beasts, black and red, are not met with in the plains; it was necessary to find them in the mountains; but the ground there is too steep to hunt the stag, the boar and the other animals as we do here. In fact the plains themselves are so parched, and hard, and full of deep fissures, which can only be seen when right upon the edge of them, that the best hounds would have their feet torn and even crippled for a long time. Besides, the plains are so covered with coarse grass that the dogs would get no help from their noses. As for shooting on the wing, the king had long given up that sort of hunting because he no longer rode on horseback. Consequently, his hunts were confined to battues.

The Duc del Arco, who, by his office of grand equerry, was master of the hunt, selected the spot to which the king and queen went. There they erected two large arbours, adjoining each other, almost entirely closed in except for a sort of large open window, breast-high from the ground. The king and queen, the captain of the guards in quarters, and four loaders of guns, were the only persons in the first arbour, with a score of guns and the wherewithal to load them. In the other arbour, on the day that I was at the hunt, was the Prince of the Asturias, with the Duc de Popoli, the Marquis del Surco, the Marquis de Santa-Crux and the Duc de Giovenazzo, major-domo and grand equerry to the queen, two or three officers of the body-guard, and myself, with a great many guns, and men to load them. A single lady-of-honour attended the queen; coming alone in a carriage, which she did not leave, having brought for her consolation a book and some work, for none of the suite went up to her. Their Majesties made the trip at full speed with relays of guards and horses; the moment they arrived at the arbours the carriages were driven away, with the poor lady-of-honour and the riding horses, very far out of sight, for fear they should frighten the animals.

Two, three, four hundred peasants under orders had made a great circuit during the night to form an inclosure; and very early in the morning they shouted from a distance to frighten the animals and make them rise, collect them together as much as possible, and then drive them gently in the direction of the arbours. Within the arbours no one was allowed to speak or move the least in the world or let a coat be seen; all had to stand there, silent. This lasted an hour and a half, and did not seem to me very amusing. At last we heard in the distance the sound of shouts, and soon after came troops of animals passing at intervals within gunshot, and immediately the king and queen began to fire. This pleasure, or this species of butchery, lasted more than half an hour, during which we saw killed, crippled, or escaping, stags, does, roedeer, wild boars, hares, wolves, badgers, foxes, and weasels without number. It was necessary to let the king and queen fire first, who sometimes allowed the grand equerry and the captain of the guards to fire; and as we did not know from which hand the shot came, we had to wait till the king's arbour stopped firing, and then let the Prince of the Asturias fire, who often had nothing to fire upon, and we even less. I did, however, shoot a fox, rather too soon if the truth be told, of which I was ashamed and made my excuses to the Prince of the Asturias, who laughed, and the company also; so I followed their example, and all this very politely. According as the peasants drew nearer and closer, the hunt came on; and it ended when the men approached the arbours, shouting still, because there was nothing behind them. Then the carriages were brought back, the persons in both arbours came out and met together, and the dead game was laid before the king. It was packed behind each of the carriages. Meanwhile the conversation turned on the hunt. We carried back on this occasion about a dozen head and more of large game, and several hares, foxes, and weasels. This is the pleasure of their Catholic Majesties on all working days. The peasants employed are paid, and the king often gives them something besides as he gets into his carriage.

Illumination of the Place Major wonderful and surprising.

On returning home after the ceremony of signing the marriage contracts, which, owing to the length of the documents to be read, lasted a very long time, Don Gaspard Giron [the king's majordomo] invited me to go and see the illumination of the Place Major. We got into his carriage, and the principal personages of my suite into carriages of my own, and were driven through by-streets to prevent our seeing the brilliancy of the illumination as we approached it. We arrived thus at a fine house with windows opening on the centre of the Place, where the king and queen always go to see the fêtes that are held there. We saw no light whatever on getting out of the carriages or in mounting the stairs; every part of the house had been carefully closed; but on entering the room which looked upon the Place, we were dazzled, and immediately went out upon the balcony, where speech failed me for five or six minutes from surprise.

The area of this Place is far more vast than that of any I have seen in Paris or elsewhere, and is longer than its width. The five-storey houses which surround it are of the same height, having all their windows at equal distances, each with a balcony of the same size and projection as the rest, with iron railings also alike, and all perfectly similar on each of the five storeys. On these balconies were two huge torches of white wax, one at each end of each balcony, simply resting against the balustrade, slightly tipping forward, without being fastened to anything. It is incredible the light these torches gave; the splendour was amazing, and a sense of majesty I cannot express laid hold of me. One could read with ease the finest print in every corner of the square, though the ground-floor rooms were not lighted at all.

As soon as I appeared upon the balcony the people crowded beneath it, crying out: *Señor! Toro! toro!* This was their way of requesting that I would obtain a bull-fight for them, which is the thing in the world for which they have the greatest passion, and which the king had for some years refused to permit, from scruples of conscience. I therefore contented myself on the following day with simply telling him of these cries of the people, without asking him to grant the request, while expressing my astonishment at so surpassing and wonderful an illumination. Don Gaspard Giron and the Spaniards who were in the house where I was, charmed with the astonishment I showed at the sight, made it publicly known, with all the more complacency because they were not accustomed to the admiration of Frenchmen, and many of the seigneurs spoke to me about it with pleasure. I had hardly time to sup, on my return from this beautiful illumination, before it was necessary to go to the palace, for the ball which the king was giving in the Salon of the Grandees, which lasted until two hours after midnight.

Departure of the king and queen for Lerma.

Thursday, November 27, was the day appointed for the departure of the king and queen for Lerma; I went after dinner to the palace to see them start, and again I received a thousand marks of their kindness. Both, especially the queen, insisted two or three times that I must not delay my coming to Lerma, on which I assured them that I should be there on their arrival, to assist them from their carriage. The Court of Spain moves like a tortoise, and was not expected to reach Lerma until the 11th of December. The king and queen always travel in a large coach belonging to the queen, with seven windows, so that on passing along the narrow mountain road to Balsaïm there were not two inches of margin between their wheels and the precipice, and in several places the wheels ran in air sometimes for one hundred, sometimes for two hundred feet, and even more. The peasants of the neighbourhood in great numbers are ordered to hold the carriage up with long leather straps, frequently renewed: and these men are changed in relays, walking over the rocks with the utmost difficulty and danger both to the carriage and themselves. Nothing was done to this road to make it more passable, yet the king and queen were not the least afraid. The women who followed the queen were half-dead with terror, though they were in narrower carriages. As for the men of the suite, they rode on mules. I shall add no reflections on this surprising custom.

I am lodged at Villahalmanzo near Lerma.

The small amount of lodging room that Lerma could furnish to the Court allowed of no one being billeted there except those on duty in the necessary offices. The adjoining villages were taken for the Court, the grandees, and the foreign ambassadors. I had the choice given me of several, and I chose Villahalmanzo, on the account I received of it. It is a short half-league from Lerma and immediately opposite, — a little valley between the two, which is crossed by a paved road with a stone bridge spanning the little river. They arranged, for me alone, the rector's house, small, airy, pretty, with chimneys built on purpose, and all the other houses in the village were arranged for my suite and others who were with me. The village is rather extensive, well-built, well-situated, and very agreeable; and there was no one there but ourselves, the rector, and the inhabitants. During the whole of our stay we did not have the slightest difficulty with any of them. Their houses were much improved by the conveniences added to them, and they were perfectly content with us and friendly with our servants. We did not do the least wrong in any way, but gave them certain presents on leaving, so that they felt an affection for us, and really regretted us, —some of them with tears. This journey was for me a very ruinous transplantation of my provisions and household.

On my arrival I fall ill with the small-pox.

I left Madrid for Lerma December 2nd, and reached our village of Villahalmanzo [after passing three days at the Escurial] on the 9th, where I found myself most comfortably settled, and so did all who were with me. We supped very gayly, and I expected the next day to walk about and amuse myself by reconnoitring the village and its neighbourhood; but in the night a fever seized me, increasing the next day and becoming violent the following night; so much so that there was no question of my going on the 11th to be present at the arrival of the king and queen at Lerma. The malady increased with such rapidity that I was thought to be in great danger, and finally at death's door. I was bled, and shortly after the small-pox, which was very prevalent in the neighbourhood, appeared. The climate was such this year that the ground was frozen hard for twelve or fourteen hours of each twenty-four, while from eleven in the morning till nearly four the sun shone brightly, and the heat was too great after mid-day to walk about; although where the sun did not shine, on account of a wall or some obstacle, the ground never thawed for a moment. The cold was all the more stinging because the air is pure and keen and the sky of unbroken serenity.

The King of Spain, who feared the small-pox extremely, and had confidence in none but his own physician, sent him to me with orders not to leave me a moment until I was well. I had, therefore, five or six persons continually with me, besides my servants, and one of the wisest and best physicians in Europe; who was, moreover, very good company, and who did not leave me day or night. Also I had three good surgeons, one of whom La Fare had brought with him. I had a great abundance of small-pox pustules of a good type, and without any dangerous crisis after they once appeared. All those who saw me, and the valets who served me, and even my kitchen, were separated from the rest. The chief physician provided himself nearly every day with fresh remedies in case of need, but gave me none, beyond making me drink nothing but water, into which were thrown oranges cut in two and allowed to simmer slowly before my fire; with an occasional spoonful of a sweet and agreeable cordial at the height of the suppuration; after which a little wine of Rota, with broths made of beef, and a partridge. Nothing was lacking in the care these people bestowed upon me, their only patient, and nothing was lacking to my amusement when I was able to take it, because of the good company I had about me at a time when convalescence from this particular malady is so wearisome and forlorn. Quite at the end I was bled and purged once; after which I lived as usual, though still in a species of isolation.

XI.

1722. Exchange of the princesses January 9.

THE year 1722 began with the exchange of the princesses, the future wives of the King of France and the Prince of the Asturias, which took place on the Isle of Pheasants, in the little river of Bidassoa which separates the two kingdoms, and where a small wooden house had been built for the purpose. The exchange was made on the 9th of January; and after reciprocal compliments and presents from the king to the Spaniards, each princess, with her suite, continued her journey. While Mlle. de Montpensier continued hers the fortieth day of my quarantine approached, and came exactly two days before her arrival at Lerma. The king and queen had had the kindness to send me several messages that they wished to see me the very day after my quarantine ended; but knowing the king's dread of small-pox I waited until they sent me an absolute command, which I had to obey, though still quite red (to which perhaps the cold contributed), in spite of certain drugs I had been made to use to unredden me. I went for the first time to Lerma to make my bow and thanks to their Catholic Majesties on the 19th of January. After compliments and remarks about the small-pox, the care and capacity of M. Hyghens, the king's physician, they did me the honour to speak of Cardinal Borgia, who had arrived at Lerma from Rome within a few days to celebrate the marriage. The audience ended with all possible expressions of kindness on the part of the king and queen, and I had good reason to congratulate myself extremely at the eagerness of the whole Court to express their joy at my recovery from so dangerous an illness.

The king, queen, and Prince of the Asturias go to meet the princess.

Having returned to dinner at my own quarters, I learned that their Catholic Majesties, with the Prince of the Asturias, all in common clothes and without any attendants, had got into a carriage in the suite of the Duc del Arco, and had driven out to meet the princess at Cogollos, a poor sort of place about four leagues from Lerma, where she was expected to arrive that evening. The Duc del Arco found her already there. He said a few words in the ear of the Marquis de Santa Crux to warn the Duchesse de Monteillano and the other ladies to restrain all notice of their Majesties' presence; after which, entering the princess's room, he made her his compliment, prolonging it as much as possible to give his royal suite sufficient time to examine her well. He then asked permission to present to her a lady and two gentlemen who were very eager to pay their respects to her. A lady coming with two men, in the suite of a third man, spoilt the mystery. The princess suspected the quality of these attendants and caught their hands to kiss them and was instantly embraced. The visit passed off with much friendliness on one side and respect and gratitude on the other; and at the end of a quarter of an hour their Majesties got into the carriage and returned to Lerma.

I go to make my bow to the princess.

I had arranged with Maulevrier that we should start between six and seven o'clock the next morning, with all my carriages and both our suites, to drive out and make our bow to the princess at Cogollos. It was eight leagues there and back, and we had barely time to do this and return before her own arrival at Lerma. We left together at seven precisely, and the mules went fast. We were presented to the princess, who had just finished dressing, and I then presented to her the Comte de Céreste, my sons, and the Comte de Lorges and M. de Saint-Simon. The Duchesse de Monteillano, the other ladies, and Santa-Crux also, did their best to induce the princess to say a word to us, but did not succeed. They endeavoured to make up for this by every possible civility. We had no time to lose, and returned to my quarters to eat a morsel in haste, which was served to us instantly, and then we started for Lerma; and well we did, for the princess arrived within half an hour.

The moment I reached the house I went up at once to the Marquis de Grimaldo's apartment, where I had been the day before. His room was opposite the end of a very large hall, at one end of which a space had been taken off to serve as a chapel. I knew I had again to deal with the nuncio; I feared he would remember what had passed at the signature of the contract [a silent dispute as to precedence], and I wished to avoid all difficulty. I therefore saw very imperfectly the reception of the princess by the king and queen, who lodged on the lower floor, and by the prince, all three precipitating themselves, so to speak, almost to the door of her carriage. I, meanwhile, went quickly in to the chapel, which I had already taken note of on my previous visit to Grimaldo.

Amusing ignorance of Cardinal Borgia who celebrates the marriage.

The *prie-dieu* of the king was directly in front of the altar, at a little distance from the steps, precisely like the *prie-dieu* of the late king at Versailles, but nearer the altar; two hassocks were before it, side by side. The chapel was empty of courtiers. I stationed myself beside the king's hassock on the right, standing just outside of the edge of his carpet, and there I amused myself much better than I expected. Cardinal Borgia, pontifically garbed, was standing at the right-hand side of the altar, his face turned towards me, learning his lesson between two chaplains in their surplices, who were holding a large book open before him. The worthy prelate could not read it; he tried hard, reading aloud and blundering. The chaplains corrected him; he got angry and scolded, began again, was corrected again, and grew angrier than ever; so much so that he turned upon them and shook them by their surplices. I laughed all I could, for he noticed nothing, being so engaged with his lesson. Marriages in Spain take place in the afternoon, and begin, like baptisms, at the door of the church. The king, the queen, the prince, and the princess arrived at the door with all the Court, and the king was announced in a loud voice. "Let them wait," cried the cardinal, very angry; "I am not ready." They stopped where they were, and the cardinal continued his lesson, redder than his red hat and perfectly furious. At last he went to the door, where something lasted for quite a time. Curiosity would have made me follow, were it not for my object in keeping my post.[1] I must have lost some diversion, for I saw the king and queen at their *prie-dieu* laughing and talking, and the whole Court laughing also. At this moment the nuncio came up to me and showed his surprise at my position by gestures, repeating, "Signor, signor!" and I, being determined not to understand him, kept showing him the cardinal and laughing, telling him he ought to have taught him better, for the honour of the Sacred College. The nuncio could understand French, but murdered it in speaking. This joke and the ingenuous air with which I made it, without seeming to be aware of the nuncio's demonstrations, made so happy a diversion that the question dropped; and all the more because the cardinal, continuing the ceremony, neither knew where he was nor what he was about, being corrected every minute by his chaplains, and puffing at them angrily, so that the king and queen could not contain themselves, nor any one else who witnessed the scene. I could only see the backs of the prince and princess on their knees, each on a hassock between the *prie-dieu* and altar, and the cardinal in front of them making grimaces of utter confusion.

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[1] His object being to prevent the nuncio from taking the post of honour. — TR.

I am made a grandee of Spain of the first class.

Amid the amusement that the poor cardinal was giving to all who saw him, I remarked the extreme satisfaction of the king and queen in seeing the accomplishment of this marriage. The ceremony over, which was not very long and during which no one knelt down but the king and queen, and, where necessary, the bridal couple, their Catholic Majesties rose and retired to the left-hand lower corner of their carpet, where they whispered together for the space of, perhaps, a good *credo;* after which the queen remained where she was, and the king came up to me, who was still standing where I had been throughout the ceremony. The king said, as he reached me: "Monsieur, I am so content with you in every respect, but particularly in the manner with which you have acquitted yourself of your embassy to me, that I wish to give you marks of my satisfaction, my esteem, and my friendship. I make you grandee of Spain of the first class, you and at the same time whichever of your two sons you may choose to be grandee of Spain and to enjoy that dignity with you; and I make your eldest son a Knight of the Golden Fleece." I immediately embraced his knees, and tried to express my gratitude and my extreme desire to render myself worthy of

My eldest son is made Knight of the Golden Fleece.

the favours bestowed upon me by my attachment, my very humble services, and profound respect. I then kissed his hand, and turned to call my children, who immediately came up to me. As soon as they approached I told the youngest to embrace the knees of the king, who loaded us with favours by making him a grandee of Spain with me. He kissed the king's hand, who said, as he raised him up, that he was very glad indeed for what he had done. I then presented the eldest to thank him for the Fleece; for this he merely bent very low indeed and kissed the king's hand. After that was over the king returned to the queen, where I followed him with my children. I bowed low before the queen, offering her my personal thanks; then I presented my children, the youngest first, the eldest after. The queen received us with great kindness, saying many agreeable things; after which she went away with the king, followed by the prince and princess, who held each other by the hand and to whom we bowed as they passed. I wished to accompany them, but I was, as it were, carried away by the crowd which pressed around me to make us compliments I paid great attention to answering each in a suitable manner, and to all as politely as I possibly could; and although I had not expected to receive these favours at this time, it seemed to me on reflection that this numerous company were satisfied with me. I was anxious to testify to the grandees of Spain that all my life I had had so high an idea of their dignity that although I had the honour to be invested with the highest rank in the Kingdom of France, I thought myself greatly honoured in belonging to theirs.

The Princess of the Asturias became unwell during the return of the Court to Madrid, at the latter part of the journey. Red blotches appeared on her face which turned to erysipelas, and caused some fever. I went to the palace as soon as the Court arrived, where I found their Majesties much alarmed. I tried to reassure them on the ground that the princess had already had both measles and small-pox, and that it was not surprising she should feel the fatigue of such a journey, and the total change of life that had happened to her. My arguments did not convince them, and the next day I found their uneasiness still greater. Besides which, the *contretemps* annoyed them greatly. All the prepared *fêtes* had to be postponed. The Salon of the Grandees was already decorated for the grand ball, and it long remained in that condition, for when the princess's convalescence began, and as it proceeded, her temper showed itself. I knew from those who were with her in private that she obstinately refused to go to the queen, after all the care and the marks of extreme kindness and constant visits she had received from her during her illness, and still received daily. She would not even leave her bedroom, but amused herself looking out of the window, where she appeared in good health. The queen herself spoke to me about it, and ordered me to see her and make her more tractable.

The Princess of the Asturias becomes unwell.

I had already seen the princess several times during her illness, even in her bed; and I now went again once or twice, without getting more than a *yes* or a *no* to any question I asked, and sometimes not that. I then took the turn of saying to her ladies before her what I wished to say to herself; the ladies assisted me and added their word. The conversation thus went on before the princess, and was, in fact, a regular lesson, in which she took no part whatever. She did, however, go to see the queen once or twice, but in dishabille and with rather a bad grace.

Extraordinary conduct of the princess towards the king and queen.

The grand ball was still prepared in the Salon of the

Grandees and only waited for the princess to consent to go to it. The king and queen liked balls; they made a great pleasure of this one, the Prince of the Asturias also; in fact the whole Court awaited it impatiently. The conduct of the princess was beginning to transpire, and had a most injurious effect upon society. I was privately warned that the king and queen were very much provoked, and the princess's ladies urged me to speak to her. I went and held a conversation with her ladies about her health, which no longer retarded the pleasures and amusements that awaited her. I brought the ball on the tapis; praised the arrangements, the scene, the magnificence, saying that this pleasure was particularly suited to the age of the princess, and how the king and queen loved her and were waiting with impatience until she could go. Suddenly she spoke, although I had not addressed her, and said, like a fretful child: "I, go to it! I shall *not* go." "Well, madame," I said, "if you do not go you will be sorry; you will deprive yourself of a pleasure, at which the whole Court expects to see you, and you have too many reasons to wish to please the king and queen to fail to do so on this occasion."

She was seated, and had not looked at me. She now turned her head towards me, and said, in the most determined tone of voice I ever heard: "No, monsieur, I repeat it, I shall not go to that ball; the king and queen can go if they choose; they like balls; I do not like them; they like to get up late and go to bed late; I like to go to bed early. They can follow their tastes, and I shall follow mine." I began to laugh, and told her she wanted to amuse herself by making me uneasy, but that I was not so silly as to take such jesting seriously: at her age [thirteen], I said, nobody gave up a ball willingly; and she had too much sense to deprive the Court of a pleasure, and above all, show a taste so little in conformity with that of the king and queen. I added that after this joke was over it would be best not to prolong the delay, which was now becoming indecent. The ladies supported me, and the conversation went on between us in the same tone, without the princess giving any sign that she heard us. On leaving, the Duchesse de Monteillano followed me, with the Duchesse de Liria and Mme. de Riscaldalgro. They surrounded me outside the door of the chamber, and expressed their alarm at so stubborn a will against duty and pleasure in a girl of her age, in a country where she had just arrived, and all were strangers to her. I was just as much alarmed as they, foreseeing consequences capable of producing great disasters. But I tried to reassure them on the ground of remaining illness and nervousness, that might produce this effect, which would cease with the return of perfect health. But I went away very far from expecting it.

The next day I took the liberty of representing to their Majesties that they were spoiling the princess; to which I added that they would some day repent of it, and try to remedy the evil when it was too late. I told them the Duc d'Orléans would be in despair, and would speak to them in the same manner that I did, only more strongly, as became him; that the princess was a mere child, who ought to be made without delay to submit to her duties; and I would not only take upon myself to explain the matter to the Duc d'Orléans, but I would answer for it to their Majesties that he would be extremely obliged to them for taking that course. I did not go again to see the princess, because I felt the inutility. The next day the queen told me there would be no grand ball, and that orders had been given to remove the decorations. But a small ball was given in the little interior gallery, at which no one was present but the seigneurs on duty, the chief equerry, the majordomos of the week, the *camerara-mayor*, the ladies of the palace, the young señoras-of-honour, and the *cameristas*. The king, queen, and Prince of the Asturias amused themselves very much, everybody danced minuets, and still more quadrilles, until three hours after midnight, when their Majesties and the prince retired.

The "Peregrine" an incomparable pearl.

It was then that I saw and fingered at my ease the famous "Peregrine," which the king wore that evening on the turned-up brim of his hat, as a pendant to a splendid diamond clasp. This pearl, of the finest water ever seen, is shaped and dented exactly like those little muscat pears which are called "seven-in-the-mouth," and come to maturity about the end of the strawberry season. That name indicates their size, though there is no mouth that could hold more than four without danger of choking. The pearl is the size of the smallest of those pears, is thick and long, and beyond comparison the finest in existence. It is unique. They say its mate was the one in Cleopatra's earring which a folly of love and magnificence induced Mark Antony to dissolve in vinegar and give to the queen to drink. Though the apartment of the Princess of the Asturias was at one end of the little gallery where the ball was given, she did not appear for an instant. I predicted only too truly to their Catholic Majesties. The princess behaved in all respects, except gallantry, in the strangest fashion. After her return to France we had time to see what she was, during the years she lived there as a widow without children.[1]

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[1] In 1724 Philippe V. resigned his government of Spain in favour of his son, Luis, Prince of the Asturias. But the latter dying in the same year, he resumed it. The Princess of the Asturias, then called Queen of Spain, returned to France as a widow the following year, when the infanta was sent back to Spain on the treaty being signed at Vienna

Lent put an end to what *fêtes* there were; and their Catholic Majesties left the palace and went to that of the Buen-Retiro. Lent is very grievous in the Castiles. Inertness and distance from the sea result in a fish-market being unknown. The largest rivers have scarcely any fish; the small ones still less, because they are torrents. There are few or no vegetables, except garlic, onions, cardoons, and a few herbs; neither milk nor butter. They have salt-fish, which might be good if the oil were sweet; but it is usually so rancid that the stench infects the streets of Madrid through Lent, which is kept by every one, young and old, men, women, seigneurs, bourgeois, and populace. One is therefore reduced to eggs cooked in every possible way, and chocolate, which is their great resource. But I tasted some buffalo milk at Aranjuez, which is most excellent, and by far the best of any. It is smooth, sweet, but not insipid; thicker than the best cream, without any taste of the animal, or of cheese or butter. I am surprised that they make no use in Madrid of such a delicious milk product. Spaniards, though always very moderate, eat as much as we do, with taste, selection, and pleasure; but as for drink they are very abstemious.

Lent; very grievous in the Castiles.

I chose the 22nd of March for my audience to take leave of the king and queen; and I was again struck with the dignity, precision, and arrangement of the king's expressions. I received many marks of personal kindness and regret at my departure from the king and queen, especially from the queen, and also very many from the Prince of the Asturias. The attachment full of respect and gratitude which I felt for the king and queen led me to do myself the honour of writing to them

I take my audience of leave March 22.

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between Spain and Austria, while England, France, and Prussia formed the "Hanover Treaty."—Tr.

on several occasions, more especially to express my extreme grief at the sending back of the infanta.[1] They often did me the honour to reply with every sort of kindness, and they always charged their new ministers in France, and persons of consideration who came to travel there, to renew the expression of their kindness to me.

Extraordinary leave-taking of the Princess of the Asturias.

But before starting I took another leave of a very different nature, and one so surprising that I cannot help writing it down, however ridiculous it may seem. I went, with my whole suite, to an audience of the Princess of the Asturias, who was standing under a dais, with her ladies on one side and the grandees on the other. I made my three bows, and then my compliment. After which I was silent, but in vain, for she answered not a word. After a few moments' silence I thought I would furnish her with something to answer; so I asked for her orders for the king, the infanta, Madame, the regent, and the Duchesse d'Orléans. She looked at me, and then gave vent to a hiccough that resounded through the room. My surprise was such that I stood confounded. A second, noisier than the first, went off. I lost countenance; impossible to help laughing; and casting my eyes right and left I saw the whole company with their hands on their mouths and their shoulders going. Finally, a third, louder than the other two, put all present into disorder and me to flight with my whole suite amid peals of laughter, all the more incontinent because they forced the barriers by which each had tried to suppress them. Spanish gravity was wholly upset; confusion reigned; every one, choking with laughter, fled as he could, while the princess never lost her stolidity or expressed herself in any other fashion. We all stopped in the next room to laugh at our ease and to talk of it freely.

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[1] April 5, 1725, M. le Duc, then prime minister, sent back to Spain the young infanta, who was being educated in Paris to be the wife of Louis XV. since her arrival in 1722. — TR.

I leave Madrid; and meet Mme. de Saint-Simon.

I left Madrid on the 24th of March, taking the route by Pampeluna, and arrived at Loches on the 13th of April at five in the evening; and on the 15th at ten in the morning I reached Chastres, where Mme. de Saint-Simon was to meet me to dine and sleep, that we might enjoy the happiness of being once more together and mutually put each other *au fait* of everything in solitude and freedom, which we could not hope for in Paris during the first days after my return. The Duc d'Humières and Louville came with her. She arrived an hour after I did at the little château of the Marquis d'Arpajon, which he had lent her, where the day seemed short indeed.

Long interview between me and the regent and Cardinal Dubois.

On my arrival in Paris I merely changed carriages at my house and drove to the Palais-Royal and went straight to Cardinal Dubois. He rushed to meet me, all flattery, and without pausing took me at once to the regent, whose reception was just as warm and more sincere. He was in his little cabinet at the end of the short gallery. We sat down, I opposite to him, his desk between us, the cardinal beside it. I rendered them an account of many things, and answered many questions. I told the Duc d'Orléans of the conduct of the Princess of the Asturias to their Catholic Majesties, of their patience and kindness towards her; after which grave matters, I amused him with an account of my parting with her, at which he laughed much.

Marriage of my daughter to the Prince de Chimay.

I had scarcely arrived at home before it became necessary to conclude a marriage which had been proposed to me for my daughter before I went to Spain. There are some women so made that they are happier to remain unmarried with the income of the *dot* that would have been given to them. Mme. de Saint-Simon and I had reason to believe that our daughter was one of these women, and we wished to treat her in that way, but my mother thought otherwise, and she was accustomed to decide. The Prince de Chimay, in wishing to marry my daughter, misled himself by chimeras as to the position in which he saw me. Before going to Spain I disguised nothing from him either of what I thought, or of the very small foundation of that which had induced him to seek this marriage. I did not wish to settle it until after my return, in order to leave him time for reflection and for cooling his ardour during my absence; but he did not cease to urge his suit on Mme. de Saint-Simon, nor she to discourage it. As soon as I returned his urgency increased, so that it was necessary at last to conclude the marriage, which took place at Meudon with as little ceremony and company as was possible. His name was Hennin-Liétard, and his father and mother were known, under the name of Comte and Comtesse de Bossut, by their alliances, their immense property in the Low-Countries, and by the high offices which they held under Charles V. and since that time. Their hobby was to think they belonged to the ancient house of Alsace, although their own was of sufficiently illustrious antiquity not to need being plastered with fables. He was a very well-made man with a very agreeable face, and an air and manner that breathed the great seigneur, which he was, in the possession of large and very fine estates, though most of them had long been under control of assignees. He was, moreover, a man without system, who with a good mind and the best sentiments, governed himself and his affairs very badly and was full of fancies and chimeras. The Duchesse Sforza, with whom he was very intimate at the time of his first marriage, predicted to me all that I found him in the end.

The Court returns permanently to Versailles.

It was determined about this time that the king should abandon his residence in Paris forever, and that the Court should in future be held at Versailles. The king arrived there in state on the 15th of June, and the infanta on the following day. They occupied the apartments of the late king and the late queen, and the Maréchal de Villeroy established himself in one of the former cabinets of Louis XIV. Cardinal Dubois had the entire and sole charge of everything, as M. Colbert had had it, and after him M. Louvois. He was following with great strides his settled project of becoming prime-minister, for which purpose he isolated the Duc d'Orléans as much as he could.

Death of the Duke of Marlborough.

The famous Marlborough died in London June 27, at nearly seventy-four years of age, — the richest private individual in Europe, but without male heirs. His sister was mother to the Duke of Berwick and had made him Earl of Marlborough and captain of the guards of James II. He belonged to the inferior nobility and was very poor. His name was John Churchill, and he became the Duke of Marlborough, peer of England, captain-general of the armies, grand-master of artillery, colonel of the first regiment of the guards, knight of the Order of the Garter, and the most successful captain of his era. His life, his actions, his fortunes are too well known to need mention here. His victory at Hochstedt made him Prince of the Empire and of Mindelheim, — an estate of which the emperor made him a present. To perpetuate the memory of it, he caused to be built in England a superb castle, to which he gave the name of Plentheim [Blenheim], a village where thirty-six battalions surrendered to him without waiting to be attacked. The honours of his obsequies and their magnificence equalled, or very nearly so, those of the kings of England. He was buried at Westminster in the chapel of Henry VII.; but this honour is not rare in England. About three years earlier an attack of apoplexy had so enfeebled him that he wept almost without ceasing and was no longer capable of anything.

Maréchal de Villeroy refuses to obey the regent.

Sunday, August 11, the regent went towards the end of the afternoon to work with the king, as he was accustomed to do on certain fixed days of the week, and now, as it was summer, on the king's return from his drive, which was always early. This work consisted of showing the king the distribution of vacant offices, benefices, certain magistracies, superintendencies, and rewards of all kinds; in explaining to him in a few words the reasons for these selections, preferences, and, sometimes, distributions of money; and, lastly, in telling him the earliest foreign news when there was any suited to his capacity, before it became public. At the end of this work, at which the Maréchal de Villeroy was always present, and M. de Fréjus occasionally ventured to remain, the Duc d'Orléans entreated the king to be so good as to go with him into his little back-cabinet, as he had a word to say to him *tête-à-tête*. Maréchal de Villeroy instantly opposed it. The Duc d'Orléans replied civilly that the king was entering an age so near to that in which he would govern for himself that it was time for him, who meantime was the trustee of the king's authority, to render him an account of matters which he was now able to understand, and which could only be explained to him alone without the presence of a third party, however deserving of confidence that party might be; and he requested the maréchal to cease putting obstacles in the way of a thing so necessary, which he, the regent, blamed himself for having postponed, solely out of consideration for him. The maréchal, getting fiery and shaking his wig, replied that he knew the respect he owed to the regent quite as well as he knew what he owed to the king and to his own office, whereby he was made responsible for the king's person; and he protested that he would not allow his Royal Highness to see the king alone, because it was his place to know all that was said to him; and especially he would not allow it alone in a room out of his sight, because his duty required him not to lose sight of the king for a moment, and in all ways to be answerable for his person. At these words the Duc d'Orléans looked at him fixedly, and said, in the tone of a master, that he forgot himself; he ought to consider to whom he was speaking and the force of his words, which he was willing to believe he did not mean; adding that respect for the presence of the king prevented him, the regent, from replying as he deserved or carrying the conversation any farther. With that he made the king a profound bow and went away. The maréchal, very angry, accompanied him a few steps, muttering and gesticulating, without the regent seeming to see or hear him, leaving the king astonished and Fréjus chuckling under his breath.

Less than two hours later it was known that the maréchal, bragging of what he had done, declared that he should esteem himself very unfortunate if the Duc d'Orléans thought he was wanting in respect when he was only seeking to fulfil his most precious duty, and he should go to the regent the next morning and come to an understanding with him, which he flattered himself would satisfy that prince. Meantime all necessary steps were being taken to arrest him; and the last form was given to them when it became known the next morning that the maréchal intended to run straight into the net.

Beyond the regent's bedroom at Versailles was a large and handsome cabinet, with four windows looking on the garden and at the same level with it, — two facing you as you enter, and two at the side, and all these opening like doors from the ceiling to the floor. This cabinet formed a corner room, where the people of the Court always waited, and adjoining it was another cabinet where the regent worked, and where he received, from the waiting-room, the most distinguished or favoured persons who wished to speak to him. Orders were given. D'Artagnan, captain of the gray mousquetaires, was in this room, knowing well what was now to be done, with many trusty officers of his company whom he had brought there, together with certain former mousquetaires in case of need; they all saw by these preparations that something was about to happen, though no one suspected what it was. There were also a number of light-horse cavalry scattered around under the windows, all in the same ignorance, and many principal officers and others in the regent's bedroom and in this large cabinet.

Is arrested and taken to Villeroy.

All being thus arranged, Maréchal de Villeroy arrived about mid-day with his usual bustle, but alone; his sedan-chair and servants were left at a distance outside of the guardroom. He entered theatrically, paused, gazed about him, and made a few steps forward. Under pretence of civility d'Artagnan and the others grouped themselves about him, and surrounded him. He asked in a tone of authority what the regent was doing. They replied that he was busy and his door was shut. The maréchal raised his voice, said he must see him, and should go in; and with that he advanced. La Fare, captain of the guards of the Duc d'Orléans, came forward in front of him, stopped him and asked for his sword. The maréchal became furious, and all present were excited. At that instant Le Blanc presented himself. A sedan-chair which had been kept hidden was placed before the maréchal. He shouted, tottered, was thrown into the chair, which was closed upon him and carried off in a twinkling through one of the windows into the garden, La Fare and d'Artagnan on either side of the chair, the mousquetaires and cavalry falling in behind, and only knowing by results what had happened. The pace was rapid; they descended the steps of the orangery on the side of the grove, found the great gates open and a carriage with six horses outside. The chair was set down beside it; in vain the maréchal cursed and swore; they put him into it, d'Artagnan jumped in beside him, an officer of mousquetaires was on the front seat, du Libois, gentleman-in-ordinary to the king, beside him, twenty mousquetaires with their officers on horseback surrounded the carriage, and — whip up, *cocher !*

It is surprising that an affair of this nature remained unknown for more than two hours in the château of Versailles. The servants of the maréchal, to whom no one had said a word on leaving, I scarcely know why, waited with his chair near the guardroom; and those who were in his apartment behind the king's cabinet only heard of his arrest after the regent had seen the king, when he sent them word that the maréchal had gone to Villeroy, where they could follow and take him all that was necessary.

It was no small embarrassment to the Duc d'Orléans to carry the news to the king. He entered his cabinet, sent away the courtiers who were there, leaving no one present but those on duty. At his first words the king flushed, his eyes filled with tears, he turned his face to the back of his chair and did not say a word, neither would he leave the room or play. He scarcely ate a mouthful at supper, and wept and could not sleep all night. The morning and dinner of the next day, 14th, were no better. That day, as I was finishing dinner at Meudon, having a great many guests, I received a courier from Cardinal Dubois, with a letter conjuring me to come at once to him at Versailles and bring some trusty person who could be sent post haste to La Trappe; and not to crack my brains in guessing what that meant, because it was impossible to guess it, and he was waiting with the utmost impatience to tell me. I sent for my carriage at once and thought it very long in coming from the stables.

The king much distressed. Extraordinary disappearance of Fréjus.

When I reached the cardinal's quarters I saw him watching for me at the window and making signs to me, and I found him at the foot of the stairs ready to meet me. He told me, as we went up, about the king's tears, greatly increased by the unaccountable absence of M. de Fréjus, who had disappeared, and had not slept at Versailles, and no one knew what had become of him, except that he was not at Villeroy nor on the road, because messengers had just brought news from there. He went on to say that this disappearance had put the king in despair and themselves into cruel perplexity; they did not know what to think of this sudden withdrawal, unless it was that Fréjus had gone to hide himself at La Trappe; and for that reason he wanted me to send and see if he was there. Dubois took me straight to the regent. We found him alone, in great distress, walking up and down his cabinet. He told me at once that he did not know what to do with the king, who cried for M. de Fréjus and would not listen to a single word; and with that the regent declaimed against so strange a flight.

Dubois urged me to write to La Trappe. Everything was so in confusion in the regent's apartments; all were talking at once in his cabinet; impossible in such a racket to write at his desk, as I usually did when alone with him; my own apartment was away in the new wing, and probably closed, as I was not expected on that day. The quickest thing was to go up to Pezé's room, which was directly above the queen's apartment, and there I began to write. My letter was just finished when Pezé rushed in, exclaiming, "He is found! he is found! Your letter is useless; come back to the Duc d'Orléans at once." Then he told me that some one who knew that Fréjus was a friend of the Lamoignons had met Courson [son of Président Lamoignon] in the great courtyard, and asked him if he had any idea what had become of Fréjus; Courson replied he did not know why they should trouble about that, for Fréjus had only gone out to sleep at Bâville, where Président Lamoignon was staying.

Serenity had returned to the regent's cabinet by the time we reached it; Fréjus was well mauled, and after discussing his prank for a time, the regent went to tell the good news to the king, while I awaited his return with Cardinal Dubois, who then told me they had news of Villeroy. He had never ceased shouting about the assault committed on his person, the audacity of the regent, the insolence of him, Dubois; nor did he stop abusing d'Artagnan the whole way for lending himself to such criminal violence. After which he invoked the manes of the late king, exalting the confidence he had placed in him, the importance of the office for which he had preferred him, Villeroy, to all the world, the uprising this bold step would cause in Paris and the kingdom, the scandal created in foreign countries; after which came deplorings of the fate of the king and the kingdom, outbursts, invectives, self-applause for his services, his fidelity, his firmness, his unvarying devotion to duty. In short, he was a man so astonished, confounded, and full of spite and wrath that he did not possess himself for a moment.

The king consoled by the return of Fréjus.

The Duc d'Orléans, on his return from the king, told us that the news had greatly pacified him; on which we concluded that when Fréjus returned in the morning the regent had better receive him well, take his escapade in good part, cajole him, and tell him it was only to spare him that the secret of Villeroy's arrest was not imparted to him; and explain the necessity of the step, which was all the more easy because Fréjus hated the maréchal, his insolence, his jealousy, his caprices, and rejoiced in soul at his banishment and the opportunity of himself possessing the king at his ease. The maréchal was left some five or six days at Villeroy, to exhale and calm down, after which, as he had no dangerous talents away from the king, he was sent to Lyon and allowed to exercise his limited functions as governor of the town and province, measures being taken of course to watch him closely, leaving du Libois near him to blunt his authority with an air of supervision which took away from it all influence. But his first fury was spent; this total removal from Paris and the Court, where not only was there no stir in his behalf, but there was even terror and stupor at an act of this importance, left him without hope, subdued his passion, and induced him to behave with wisdom in order to avoid more grievous treatment.

Such was the fall of a man who was far below the stations he had filled; who showed his clay in all of them; who put audacity and vain imaginations in the place of prudence and sound judgment; who behaved everywhere like a frivolous comedian, and whose profound and universal ignorance (except of the low arts of a courtier) was always allowing the thin crust of virtue and integrity with which he plastered his ingratitude, his mad ambition, his thirst for making himself a leader in spite of his weakness and terrors, for holding the helm of which he was radically incapable, to crack and show the man. It is enough to say here that he never raised himself after this fall, and that the rest of his life was only bitterness, regrets, and contempt. He had persuaded the king — and I shall give proofs of this if I have the time to complete these Memoirs as I propose — he had, I say, persuaded the king that he alone, by his vigilance and his precautions, preserved the king's life, which others were seeking to destroy by poison. This was the reason of the king's tears when he was taken from him, and of his well-nigh despair when Fréjus disappeared.

Fréjus' prompt return dissipated half these fears, and the continuance of his own good health delivered the king, little by little, of the rest. Fréjus, who had so great an interest in preserving it, neglected nothing to remove from his mind such fatal ideas, and to let the venom fall on those who invented or inspired them. In this way he used the best means to protect himself against a return of the maréchal and to attach the king to himself without reserve; of which we have since felt but too well the tremendous success.

Singular conversation between the Duc d'Orleans and me.

On one of my ordinary days with the Duc d'Orléans I went from Meudon to Versailles at four o'clock, the hour when the regent had no one with him. After a few moments of general conversation I laid upon his desk the papers about which I had to report. He sat at the desk and I opposite to him, as usual. I found him preoccupied, absent-minded, making me repeat things, — he, who usually understood them before they were half explained. This wandering of his mind was so unusual that I finally asked him the cause. He hesitated, stammered, and would not explain it. I smiled, and asked if it was something I had heard whispered about his thinking of making Cardinal Dubois prime minister. The question appeared to me to relieve him; his air seemed freer and more serene; and he told me it was true that Cardinal Dubois was dying of a desire to get that place; that as for him, he was tired to death of business and the constraint he was under to spend all his evenings at Versailles; that in Paris he could at least amuse himself with his suppers and his company, who were always at hand; but to have his brains cracking all day long with business only to spend his evenings in being bored was more than he could stand; and he was inclined to throw the burden on a prime minister, who would give him some rest in the daytime and liberty to amuse himself in Paris. I laughed and assured him I thought that a most excellent reason to which there was no reply. He saw that I was twitting him, and said I did not feel the burden of his days, nor the dreadful void of his evenings, and the horrible ennui of spending them with the Duchesse d'Orléans, where he did not know what to do with himself.

He had the patience to listen to what I said to him and I thought I had produced an effect. After a short silence he sat bolt upright on his chair and exclaimed: "I'll go and plant cabbages at Villers-Cotterets;" and with that he got up and began to walk up and down the cabinet, and I with him. I asked him what assurance he had that he would be allowed to plant them in peace, or even safety; I told him every one would pick quarrels with his administration, scheme dangerous plots and alarm the king, if a prince of his mind, value, and capacity, who could not be removed by any hand, removed himself because he was irritated and disgusted with his present state. He made a few turns more in silence; after which he owned it required reflection; and then he began to walk again.

Dubois well-known to his master; incredible weakness of the regent.

Presently, finding himself against the wall, at the corner of his desk, where there happened to be two stools, — I see the place still, — he pulled me by the arm upon one and sat down himself upon the other, and turning to face me, he asked vehemently if I did not remember the time when Dubois was valet to Saint-Laurent, and thankful to be so; and from that he went over all the steps and divers degrees of Dubois' rise till he came to the present day, and then he cried out: "And he is not content; he persecutes me to make him prime minister; and I am very sure that when he is that he won't be satisfied, and what can he be higher than that?" adding, as if replying to himself, "God the Father if he could." "Most assuredly," I replied, "you can count on that; and it is for you, monsieur, who know him so well, to see whether you want to be his stepping-stone to mount above your head." "Oh! I should prevent that," he replied, and again he walked about, without saying more; neither did I, so occupied was I with that "I should prevent that," at the end of a conversation so earnest and his passionate recital of the life of Cardinal Dubois *ab incunabulis,* which up to this time I had given no occasion for. This last promenade lasted some time, still in silence, he, with his head lowered, as was usual with him when embarrassed and pained, I, as having said all and waiting until he should break the silence. At last he sat down again at his desk, I seated opposite as before; he with his elbows on the desk and his head between his two hands. He remained thus half a quarter of an hour, without stirring, without opening his lips, and I the same, though I did not take my eyes off him. It ended by his raising his head, without otherwise moving, advancing it towards me, and saying in a low, weak, ashamed voice: "Why wait and not declare it at once?" Such was the fruit of the conversation! I cried out: "Oh! monsieur, what a thing to say! What is urging you so hard? There is time enough. Take time for reflection on what we have just said. Let me explain to you what a prime minister is, and the prince who makes him one." He gently put his head back into his hands and said nothing. I felt then that the salvation of the matter, if indeed it could be hoped, lay not in reasons, which were all exhausted, but solely in delay. Presently, after a short silence, he rose and said: "Ho, then! come back to-morrow at three o'clock precisely and argue the thing over once more; we shall have time." I took the papers I was to carry away and went out; he ran after me and called me back to say: "To-morrow at three o'clock; I entreat you, don't fail," and shut the door.

Another strange conversation between the regent and me.

The next day, August 22, I kept the appointment. I found him alone in his cabinet, walking about with an easier air than the day before. "Well," he said as soon as I went up to him, "what more can we say about the affair of yesterday? It seems to me that all is said, and there is nothing to do but to declare the prime minister at once." I recoiled two steps, saying that for a step of such importance it was hasty action. He answered that he had thought it over well; that all that I had said to him was in his mind; but the end was that he was worn-out with business every day, with ennui every evening, with the persecutions of Cardinal Dubois every instant. His walk continued for seven or eight turns more, and then he seated himself at his desk in the same attitude as the night before, and I opposite, the desk between us. [Again the arguments were gone over.] A rather long silence succeeded this strong statement. The regent's head, still between his hands had dropped almost to the desk. He raised it at last and looked at me with a dreary, gloomy air; then he lowered his eyes, it seemed to me in shame, and remained for some time longer in that position. At last he rose and made several turns about the room, still saying nothing. What was my horror and confusion when he broke that silence! He stopped, turned half towards me without raising his eyes, and said, suddenly, in a low, sad voice: "There must be an end to this; nothing can be done but declare it instantly." "Monsieur," I said, "you are good and wise, and, above all, the master. Have you any commands for Meudon?" I made him a bow, and left the room instantly, as he cried out: "But shall I not see you again soon?" I made him no answer and shut the door. Then I fled to Meudon to exhale at my ease.

Death of the Princesse des Ursins.

Towards the close of this year the famous Princesse des Ursins died in Rome, where she had settled for the last six years, preferring to govern there the little Court of England than not to govern at all. She was eighty-five years old, still fresh, erect, with grace and charm; her health perfect until the rather long illness of which she died; her head and intellect as good as at sixty, and she herself much honoured in Rome. She had the satisfaction of seeing Mme. de Maintenon forgotten and become a mere nobody at Saint-Cyr, and then to survive her. Her own death, which, had it happened a few years earlier, would have echoed throughout all Europe, made no sensation. The little Court of England regretted her, also a few private friends, of whom I was one without concealment, although, on account of the Duc d'Orléans, I did not keep up my correspondence with her; as for other persons, they did not seem to be aware that she was gone. She was, however, a person so extraordinary throughout the whole course of her long life, and one who figured so grandly and strangely, though in diverse manners, whose spirit, courage, industry, and resources were so rare, and her reign so absolute and so undisguised in Spain, her character so sustained and so unique, that her life deserves to be written and would hold a place among the most curious records of the history of our times.

Death of Dacier; his wife.

The world of letters lost Dacier about the same time, who had made himself notable by his works and his erudition. He was seventy-one years old, an author and translator in charge of the king's books, which made him well-known and esteemed by the whole Court. His wife, who was far more solidly learned than himself, had been most useful to him, and was frequently consulted by savants in Greek and Latin belles-lettres, in antiquities, and in criticism. She left behind her a number of fine works. But she was only learned in her cabinet with learned people; elsewhere she was simple, unaffected, agreeable and witty in conversation, but no one would have guessed that she knew more than ordinary women, with whom she could talk fashions and all the other trifles of common intercourse with simplicity and naturalness, as though she were not capable of better things. She died in the deepest sentiments of piety in 1720, aged sixty-eight; her husband two years later.

Death of Madame; her character.

Madame, whose health had all her life been extremely strong and unvarying, had not felt well for some time past and of late had been so ill as to be convinced she was about to fall into some malady from which she should never recover. We have seen how, on the death of Monsieur, she had taken as her ladies the Maréchale de Clérembault and the Comtesse de Beuvron, whom she had always loved, and whom Monsieur had driven out of the house because he hated them. The Maréchale de Clérembault believed she had a great knowledge of the future through the science of little dots, but as, thank God, I do not know what that is, I shall not explain the operation, in which, however, Madame had implicit faith. She consulted the maréchale therefore about her going to Reims for the king's coronation; the maréchale answered firmly: "Go, madame, in all security; I am perfectly well." This meant that she had learned from the little dots that she should die before Madame; strong in that confidence Madame went to Reims. But on her return from the coronation, she lost the Maréchale de Clérembault, who died in Paris, November 27, in her eighty-ninth year, having up to that time had perfect health, her mind, faculties, and the use of all her senses as at forty.

Madame was all the more grieved at the loss of her old and intimate friend because she knew that though the little dots had always predicted she should survive her, it would be only for a very short time. And in point of fact, she followed her very closely. Dropsy set in, and made in a very few days such progress that she prepared for death, with great firmness and piety. She desired to have the former Bishop of Troyes, brother of the Maréchale de Clérembault, constantly near her, and said to him: "M. de Troyes, this is a very strange game the maréchale and I have played." The king went to see her, and she received all the sacraments. She died at Saint-Cloud on the 8th of December, at four in the morning, aged seventy-one years.

Madame was a princess of the olden time, — attached to honour, virtue, rank, grandeur, and inexorable as to their observances. She was not without intellect; and what she saw she saw very clearly. A good and faithful friend, safe, true, upright; easy to shock and prejudice, difficult to recall from a prejudice; coarse; dangerous in her public attacks; very German in her manners and customs, frank, ignorant of all delicacy for herself or others, sober, solitary, and full of notions. She loved dogs and horses, hunting and theatres passionately; she was never seen except in full dress, or in a man's wig and riding-habit, and was more than sixty years old before, well or ill (but she never was the latter), she had a wrapper. She loved the regent passionately, also her own nation and all her relatives, though she had never seen them. She spent her life after Monsieur's death in writing to them. She esteemed, pitied, and almost loved the Duchesse d'Orléans, whom she treated very well both before and after the dismissal of Mme. d'Argenton. She blamed the disorderly life of the Duc d'Orléans and was supremely indignant at that of the Duchesse de Berry; about which she sometimes unbosomed herself with the utmost bitterness and perfect confidence to Madame de Saint-Simon, who, from the first of her coming to Court, had found grace in her esteem and friendship, which never varied. Madame was, in all respects, more of a man than a woman. She was strong, courageous, German to the last degree, frank, upright, good, and benevolent, noble and grand in her manners, but petty to excess in all that related to what was due to her. She was very unsociable, constantly shut up in her room and writing, save for the short hours of her Court; the rest of her time she spent alone with her ladies. She was hard, rude, ready to take dislikes; terrible for the tirades she would sometimes make, and to any one, no matter who. She had no pliancy, no readiness of mind, though, as I have said, she was not without intellect. She was jealous to the utmost pettiness of all that she considered her rights; her face and figure were those of a rustic. Yet she was withal capable of a tender and inviolable affection. The Duc d'Orléans loved her and respected her much, and did not leave her during her illness; he had always paid her great attentions, but was never influenced by her. He was greatly afflicted. I passed several hours with him at Versailles on the day after her death, and I saw him weep bitterly.[1]

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[1] The letters of Elizabeth-Charlotte of Bavaria, Princess Palatine and Duchesse d'Orléans, addressed chiefly to her relations, have been published and are among the most valuable records of that time; a selection from them will be found in the 7th volume of this series of Historical Memoirs. — Tr.

XII.

1723.
Sterility of the narrative of this year; its cause.

THIS year, 1723, the end of which is the limit I have prescribed for these Memoirs, will not have the amplitude or the details of its predecessors. My heart was wrung to see the regent under the lash of his unworthy minister, not daring to do anything without him or against his will; the State a prey to the selfish interests, the greed, the madness of that unfortunate man, and without a remedy. Whatever experience I had of the Duc d'Orléans' amazing weakness, it seemed to me monstrous that he should have made that man prime minister after what I had said to him, after what he had said to me, and after his own statement that he viewed the matter himself as I did, all of which I have related in its place with the most exact veracity. I no longer approached that poor prince, of so many great and useful talents buried, without repugnance; I could not help feeling about him as the wicked Israelites said to each other in the desert about the manna: *Nauseat anima mea super cibum istum levissimum.* I no longer deigned to speak to him. He saw it and I felt that he was pained by it; he tried to bring me back to him though never daring to speak to me of public affairs except lightly and always with constraint, and yet not able to keep himself entirely from doing so. I scarcely took pains to answer him, and I ended such topics as soon as I could; I shortened and delayed my audiences; I listened coldly to his reproaches. And truly, what could I have to say or to discuss with a regent who was not one at all, not even of himself, far less of the kingdom, which was now in disorder?

Whenever Cardinal Dubois met me he almost paid court to me. The ties of all times and without interruption were so strong between the Duc d'Orléans and myself that the prime minister, having tested them more than once, dared not flatter himself that he could break them. His resource was to disgust me by impelling his master to a reserve with me that was wholly new between us. But it cost the regent more than it did me, because of the habit, I shall even venture to say the utility, this confidence had been to him; whilst I could more readily give it up, from the vexation I felt at seeing no fruit of it for the good of the State, or for the honour and welfare of the regent, now wholly delivered up to his pleasures in Paris and abandoned to his minister. The conviction of my perfect uselessness made me retire more and more, without ever having the faintest suspicion that a contrary course would be dangerous to me, or that, weak and abandoned as the regent was to Cardinal Dubois, the latter could ever succeed in getting me exiled like the Duc de Noailles and Canillac, or that he could ever make me feel such disgust that I should exile myself. I continued, therefore, my customary life; that is to say, I never saw the Duc d'Orléans except *tête-à-tête;* but I saw him less and less, and always coldly, briefly, without giving an opening for the mention of public affairs, turning them aside if he broached them, or replying in a manner that quickly dropped them. With such conduct and such strong feelings, it will readily be seen that I could be and do nothing; and therefore what I have to relate of this year will have less of the curious and instructive interest of good and faithful memoirs, and more of the dryness and sterility of the facts of a gazette.

The king attains his majority.

February the 19th the king received at Versailles the respects of the Duc d'Orléans and all the Court on his majority,[1] and he then declared the choice of three new dukes and peers: Biron, Lévi, and La Vallière, cousin of the Princesse de Conti. The next day the king went in state to Paris, to the Tuileries; and on the 22nd he went to parliament and held his *lit de justice* for the declaration of his majority and the reception of the three new dukes and peers. The session ended by the registration of a new edict against duels, which were again becoming frequent. On the 23rd the king received at the Tuileries the harangues of the great societies, and those of all other bodies that are accustomed to harangue.

The Council of Regency ends; the Council of State takes its place.

The Council of Regency came to an end. The new Council of State was composed of only the Duc d'Orléans, the Duc de Chartres, M. le Duc, Cardinal Dubois, and Morville, secretary of State, until then without functions, to whom Cardinal Dubois turned over his office of secretary of State and the department of foreign affairs.

It was now some time since the Comte de Toulouse had taken a fancy to the Marquise de Gondrin at the Baths of Bourbon, where they had met and seen much of each other. She was the sister of the Duc de Noailles, whom he neither liked nor esteemed, and widow, with two sons, of the eldest son of the Duc d'Antin, with whom the Comte de Toulouse had always had much intercourse of a proper and becoming kind because they were both sons of Mme. de Montespan. Mme. de Gondrin had been lady of the palace during the last months of the dauphine's life; she was young, gay, and thoroughly Noailles, her bust very beautiful, her face

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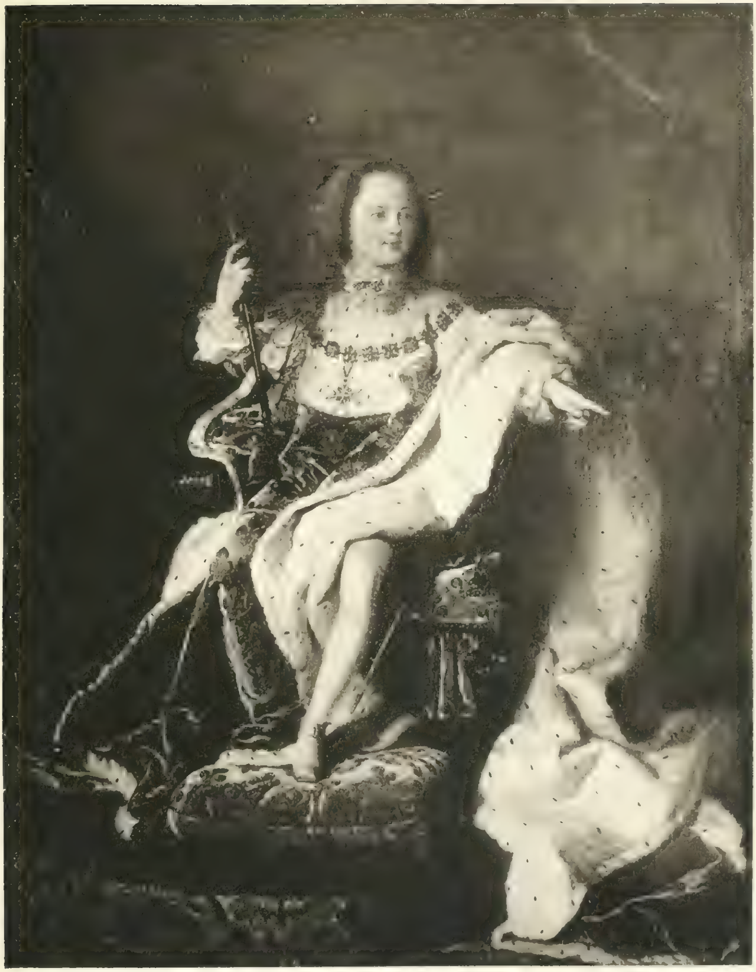
[1] Louis XV. was born Feb. 10, 1710, and was therefore thirteen years old; Rigaud's portrait of him was painted at this time — TR.



Louis XV

agreeable, and she had never made any one talk of her. The affair led on, in the greatest secrecy, to marriage. The better to conceal that event the Comte de Toulouse took the occasion of the *lit de justice* on the king's majority, from which he was excluded, because the bastards could no longer cross the floor, and for that reason they would not go to parliament. Neither did the Cardinal de Noailles, because his purple would have had to yield precedence to the peers-ecclesiastical. The Maréchale de Noailles went alone with her daughter to the archbishop's palace, where the Comte de Toulouse went also, alone with d'O. The cardinal said mass and married them in his chapel, on leaving which they all returned as they came. Nothing transpired about this wedding, and people were long without even suspecting it, all the more because the Comte de Toulouse was supposed to be very far indeed from marrying.

Marriage of the Comte de Toulouse.

About this time the plague, which had so long devastated Provence, stopped entirely, so that the barriers were raised, commerce re-established, thanksgivings were offered publicly in all the churches of the kingdom, and at the end of a few months trade was again renewed with foreign nations.

On the 11th of June the king went to live at Meudon. The pretext was to clean the château of Versailles; the real reason, the convenience of Cardinal Dubois. Flattered to the last degree by being called to preside over an assembly of clergy, he wished to enjoy that honour. He also wished to be present from time to time at the meetings of the Company of the West; Meudon brought him nearer to Paris by half way than Versailles, and spared him the paved road. His debaucheries had given him very painful and continual sufferings which the motion of a carriage aggravated, though

The king at Meudon — for the convenience of Cardinal Dubois.

he concealed them with great care. The king held a review of his household troops at Meudon, at which the pride of the prime minister led him to appear, but it cost him dear. He appeared on horseback, the better to enjoy his triumph; he suffered cruelly, and his ailment increased with such violence that he was forced to call in help. He saw, in the deepest secrecy, the most celebrated surgeons and physicians, who all thought ill of his case; and through their reiterated visits and a few indiscreet remarks the matter began to transpire. He could no longer go to Paris except occasionally, and then with the greatest suffering, and solely to hide his malady, which gave him now no rest. And yet, no matter what his condition was, his ruling passions occupied his thoughts and time as if his age and health still promised him forty years of life; the desire to enrich himself and to perpetuate the sole and sovereign power in his own hands tormented him with the same intensity.

Illness and death of Cardinal Dubois.

But on the 8th of August, Saturday, he became so ill that the surgeons and doctors assured him that he must submit to a very urgent operation, without which he could not hope to live for more than a few days, because the abscess which had broken when he rode to the review would end in gangrene, if it had not already done so, by the suffusion of pus; and they told him he must be taken at once to Versailles to undergo the operation. The shock of this terrible announcement was so great that he could not be moved, even in a litter, till Monday, the 10th, when he started at five in the morning.

After leaving him for a time to rest, the physicians and surgeons proposed to him to receive the sacraments first, after which they would perform the operation. This was not accepted peacefully. He had scarcely ceased to be in a state that was well-nigh madness since the day of the review, and his excitement had been much increased by the proposal of the operation. However, he sent for a Franciscan friar of Versailles, with whom he was alone for fifteen minutes — so great and good a man and so well prepared could not need more; besides, the last confessions of prime ministers are privileged. When the surgeons re-entered his room they proposed to him to receive the viaticum; on which he cried out that that was easy to say, but there was a special ceremonial for cardinals which he did not know, and they must send to Cardinal de Bissy in Paris and inquire about it. The surgeons looked at each other, seeing plainly that he was only wanting to gain time; but as the operation was pressing they prepared to perform it without waiting any longer. On this he drove them away furiously, and would not hear of it again.

The Faculty, knowing the imminent danger of further delay, sent word of it to the Duc d'Orléans, who was at Meudon, but went immediately to Versailles in the first carriage that came to hand. He exhorted the cardinal to submit to the operation, and asked the Faculty if they were sure of the result. The surgeons replied that they could promise nothing, but that the cardinal had not two hours to live if it was not done at once. The Duc d'Orléans then returned to the patient's bed, and begged him so earnestly that he consented. The operation was performed in five minutes at five o'clock by La Peyronie, first surgeon to the king, succeeding Maréchal, who was present with Chirac and other celebrated surgeons and physicians. The cardinal screamed and stormed terribly. The Duc d'Orléans returned to the room immediately after, when the Faculty told him that from the nature of the sore and the discharge from it the patient had not long to live. In fact, he died just twenty-four hours later, Tuesday, August 11, at five in the afternoon, grinding his teeth at the surgeons, especially Chirac, whom he had never ceased abusing.

They brought him the extreme unction, however. As to communion, nothing more was said about that, and no priest was near him; he finished his life in despair and wrath at being forced to quit it. Fortune had tricked him; he had bought her dearly and slowly, with all sorts of troubles, cares, projects, schemes, anxieties, toils, and torments of mind; at last she had poured upon him, in torrents, grandeur, power, riches incalculable, to let him enjoy them four years only, and then to tear them from him at the most smiling moment of his joy. He died at sixty-six, the master of his master, less a prime minister than possessing royal power in all its plenitude and independence, cardinal, Archbishop of Cambrai, controller of the posts, enjoying the revenues of seven abbeys, and receiving, so it was stated, a pension from England of forty thousand pounds sterling. I have had the curiosity to look up his revenues, and I think it interesting to write down here what I have discovered about them, — diminishing somewhat those from his benefices to avoid all danger of over-statement. They were as follows: —

His wealth.

Church benefices	frs.	324,000
Prime minister		150,000
Posts		100,000
Pension from England		960,000
Total		1,534,000

Add to this that he had, as I believe, twenty thousand francs a year from the clergy as cardinal; but this I do not know with certainty. What he had obtained from and through Law was something enormous; he used a great deal of it in Rome to obtain his cardinalate, but a vast amount of ready money still remained to him. He had an immense quantity of the choicest gilt and silver plate of admirable workmanship, the richest furniture, the rarest jewels of all kinds, the finest horses in any country, the most sumptuous equipages. His table was exquisite and splendid in every way, and he did the honours of it well, though extremely sober himself by nature and by regimen.

What a monster of fortune, when we think whence he came and how rapidly he fell! It is very literally to him that we may apply this passage in the Psalms: —

"I myself have seen the wicked in great power and flourishing like a cedar of Lebanon; I went by and lo! he was gone; I sought him but his place could nowhere be found." *Vidi impium superexaltum et elevatum sicut cedros Libani; et transivi, et ecce non erat, et non inventus locus ejus.*

His obsequies.

There was no funeral oration at his obsequies, for no one dared make one. His brother, older than himself, a worthy man, had left but one son, a canon of Saint-Honoré, who had never wanted places or benefices and lived a saintly life. He received an enormous inheritance, but would scarcely touch any of it. He employed part in putting up a species of mausoleum to his uncle, — handsome, but modest, built against the wall at the foot of the church where the cardinal is buried, with a very Christian inscription upon it. The rest of the money he distributed among the poor, for fear it might bring him a curse if he kept it.

Sketch of him.

There is many an example of amazing fortune, even in men who rise from nothing, but there is none in a person so destitute of all talent (if we except that of base and underhand intrigue) as Cardinal Dubois. His mind was very ordinary, his knowledge most common, his capacity nil; his appearance that of a ferret and a blackguard; his utterance disagreeable, jerky, always hesitating; his falseness was written on his forehead; his morals, unrestrained, could not be hidden. Add to these points furies that might pass for fits of madness; a head incapable of containing more than one thing at a time, or of following anything that was not for his personal interest. Nothing was sacred to him, no tie respected; open contempt for faith, promises, honour, truth, integrity; great delight and continual practice in making game of all such things; voluptuous as well as ambitious; wanting all things; counting himself as everything and whatever was not for him as nothing, and considering it as total idiocy to think or act otherwise. With that, soft, servile, supple, flattering, admiring; taking all sorts of forms with the utmost facility, and playing any kind of part, often contradictory, to attain his ends; but, nevertheless, very little capable of persuading. His arguments were always impulsive and fitful, involved, perhaps unconsciously so, and devoid of logic and precision; unpleasantness followed him everywhere. Nevertheless, he had moments of amusing vivacity when he chose, and could tell diverting stories; though these were disfigured by his elocution, which might have been good were it not for a stutter which his natural duplicity had turned into a habit, from a desire to be uncertain in what he said and replied. With such defects, it is hardly conceivable that the only man he was ever able to attract was the Duc d'Orléans, who had so fine a mind, such clear-sighted intelligence, and who could seize so quickly on all that exhibits the real man. But Dubois won him when a child, in his functions as tutor; he took possession of him as young man by encouraging his liking for liberty, for a false air of knowledge of the world, for the allurements of debauchery, and his impatience of all restraint; he spoilt his heart, his mind, his conduct with those fine theories of learned libertines from which the poor prince could never free himself, any more than he could free himself from the contrary sentiments of reason, truth, and conscience, which he took such pains to smother.

Dubois insinuated himself in this way, and had no study more at heart than to retain by every sort of means his master's favour, on which depended his own advantages, which at first were not so much; though even then they were considerable for the valet of the rector of Saint-Eustache, and later of Saint-Laurent. He therefore never lost sight of his prince, whose great gifts he perceived, and whose great defects he knew so well how to put to profit; it was the only talent of which he was master.

His crazy capers.

The public frenzies of Cardinal Dubois, especially after he became master and no longer restrained them, would fill a volume. I shall only mention a few as specimens. His fury would sometimes make him rush round and round the room, flying from chairs to tables without setting foot to the ground. The Duc d'Orléans told me several times that he had often been witness of these occasions. On the Easter-Sunday after he was made cardinal, he woke at eight o'clock and rang till he pulled down the bell-rope, blaspheming horribly at his servants, spluttering filth and insults, and shouting to know why they had not waked him earlier, for he wanted to say mass, and he did not know how he should ever get time with all the rest that he had to do. The best thing he ever did was not to say it at all after this fine preparation, and I do not know that he ever said it after his consecration.

His marriage.

Cardinal Dubois had long been married, and therefore very obscurely. He paid his wife well to hold her tongue after he got his benefices; but when he dawned into grandeur he found her extremely embarrassing; he was always in terror lest she should make him miss his great ecclesiastical dignities. His marriage had taken place in the Limousin. As soon as he was Archbishop of Cambrai he confided the matter to Breteuil, conjuring him to get rid of every proof of his marriage cautiously and without scandal. The wife never dared to say a word. After her husband's death she came to Paris and received a large sum out of his immense property, on which she lived obscurely but much at her ease, dying in Paris about twenty years after Dubois, by whom she had no children.

The Duc d'Orléans greatly relieved by his death.

I shall say no more, because, as I before remarked, it would make a volume. I have said enough to show this monstrous personage, whose death was a comfort to great and small, and, in truth, throughout Europe. But the most comforted person of all was the Duc d'Orléans. He had long groaned in secret under the weight of so hard a tyranny and the trammels of a chain he had forged for himself. Not only could he no longer direct or decide anything, but he was forced to explain, uselessly, to the cardinal what he desired, whether in great matters or in small ones. He was compelled to submit them all to the will of the cardinal, who would fly into fury, reproaching and insulting him as though he were a private person if he chanced to contradict him. The poor prince also felt the isolation in which he found himself, and through this very isolation and abandonment, the power of the cardinal and the eclipse of his own. He feared him; the man became intolerable to him; he longed to get rid of him. This was shown in a thousand ways, but he did not dare to do it; in fact he knew not how. Isolated and perpetually watched as he was, he had no one in whom he could confide, and if he had attempted to do so, the cardinal, warned of it, would have doubled his capers to hold by fear what he knew he could not hope to keep in any other way.

The king appoints the Duc d'Orléans prime minister.

As soon as he was dead the Duc d'Orléans returned to Meudon to inform the king, who immediately begged him to take charge of affairs, declared him prime minister, and received his oath of office on the following day; the letters-patent for which were at once drawn up and certified by parliament. This declaration, so prompt that the Duc d'Orléans was unprepared for it, was wholly due to the fear of the Bishop of Fréjus that some private person might become prime minister. The king liked the Duc d'Orléans, as I have said already, for the respect he received from him, and the manner in which he worked with him, making him always the apparent master of the favours bestowed by the choice of the persons he proposed to him; besides which, he never bored him, or thwarted his amusements by his hours of work. Whatever care, whatever suppleness Cardinal Dubois had employed to win the king's mind and coax him to himself, he never succeeded in doing so; and it was easy to see, without having very good eyes, a dislike on the part of the king to the minister. The cardinal was in despair, but he kept his legs going, always in hopes of succeeding in the end.

Death of Mesmes, president of parliament.

A still more corrupt man, if that be possible, than Cardinal Dubois, followed him twelve days later; this was the president de Mesmes who, already weighted by a few slight apoplexies, suffered one which carried him off in twenty-four hours at sixty-one years of age, without giving a sign of life in that short interval. I mean more corrupt than Dubois through his profound and notorious treachery, and because, being born to a rich and honourable position, he had no need to build up his fortunes like Dubois, who came of the dregs of the people; not that this is an excuse for the latter, but it was a temptation the less to the former, who had only to enjoy what he was, with honour. I have had so many occasions to make known this magistrate, who was equally odious and contemptible, that I think I may dispense with soiling my pages any further with him. I was peaceably living at La Ferté with excellent company for more than two months without choosing to leave it, in spite of the couriers which Belle-Île and others despatched to me on the death of Cardinal Dubois, urging my return. Vanity and greed for a pension brought me another courier on the death of the president, from his daughters [one of whom was married to the Duc de Lorges], entreating me to return and obtain it for them from the Duc d'Orléans.

I yielded on this occasion to the virtue and piety of Mme. de Saint-Simon, who was absolutely determined that I should not refuse to do them this kindness; I therefore started, and she herself returned to Paris a few days after me. The Court had returned from Meudon to Versailles on the 13th of August, that is, some ten days earlier, and it was there that I found the Duc d'Orléans.

I find the Duc d'Orléans and go back to him, the same as ever.

As soon as he saw me enter his cabinet he ran to me, and asked me eagerly if I meant to abandon him. I replied that as long as his cardinal had lived, I felt myself useless beside him, and that I had profited by it for my freedom and for my repose; but now that that obstacle to all good was removed, I should always be very humbly at his service. He made me promise to live with him as before, and, without making any reference to the cardinal, he began to talk about present affairs, domestic and foreign, explaining to me how he stood, relating to me the flutter of England and Holland regarding the new company of Ostende formed by the emperor, which he wished to maintain and the two powers wished to prevent, for the sake of their commerce; and how France was affected, both for and against, together with his own views of conduct in the matter. I found him content, gay, and resuming work with pleasure. When we had talked over everything foreign and domestic, and about the king, with whom he was much pleased, I spoke to him of the pension for which the daughters of Mesmes, the late president, requested me to ask him. He began to laugh and scoff at them for sending to him again after the quantities of money he had given to their father, or rather that their father had so often filched from him; and he laughed at me for being their solicitor in a thing so absurd, after all that had passed between me and the president, whose funeral oration he then and there made in few but telling words. I acknowledge frankly that I did not insist upon a thing that I myself thought unbecoming, and about which I cared nothing at all. From this time forth I lived with the Duc d'Orléans as I had always done before Cardinal Dubois was made prime minister; and he with me in all his former confidence. I must admit, however, that I did not seek to make great use of it.

Sad condition of his health.

The new château de Meudon had been restored to me after the return of the Court to Versailles, furnished as it had been before the king went there. The Duc and Duchesse d'Humières shared it with us, and good company they were. The Duc d'Humières asked me to drive him to Versailles early one morning, that he might thank the Duc d'Orléans for his lodging. We found him not dressed, still in the lower room he had made into a wardrobe, seated among his valets and two or three of his principal officers. I was frightened. I saw before me a man with his head hanging, his face of a purplish red, and so stupefied that he did not even see me as I approached him. His servants told him I was there. He turned his head slowly towards me, almost without raising it, and asked in a thick voice what brought me there. I had gone there to hasten his coming up to his dressing-room in order not to keep the Duc d'Humières waiting too long; but I was so astonished that I stopped short. I took Simiane, first gentleman of his Bedchamber, aside to a window, where I expressed my surprise and alarm at the state in which I saw his master. Simiane told me that he had been so for some time past in the mornings; there was nothing extraordinary in his state that day, and I was only surprised because I never saw him at those hours; he assured me that nothing would show of it as soon as the prince had shaken himself together and was dressed. This condition did, however, appear a good deal when he came up to dress. He received the Duc d'Humières' thanks with a puzzled, heavy look; and he, always so gracious and polite to every one, and knowing so well how to say the right thing at the right time, scarcely answered at all. A moment later we retired, M. d'Humières and I. We dined with the Duc de Gesvres, who took d'Humières to make his thanks to the king.

This condition of the Duc d'Orléans caused me to make many reflections. For some time past the secretaries of State had told me that during the early morning hours they could make him agree to whatever they wished, and could have made him sign anything, even to his own injury. This was the fruit of his suppers. I was not mute to him on that subject, but all representations were perfectly useless. I knew, moreover, that Chirac had plainly told him that the continuation of these suppers would lead either to sudden apoplexy or to dropsy of the chest, because his respiration would sooner or later be affected; on which, he rebelled against the latter evil, as being slow, suffocating, interfering with everything, and always threatening death; he declared that he much preferred apoplexy, which took you unawares and killed you suddenly without your having time to think about it.

I warn Fréjus of the state of the Duc d'Orléans' health.

Any other man, instead of exclaiming against the manner of the death that threatened him, and preferring one so terrible to another that gave him time to collect himself, would have thought about living, and doing what he could to promote it by a sober, healthy, and decent life, which, with his constitution, might have given him a great many years and very agreeable ones. But such was the blindness of this unhappy prince! At this time I was living in much intimacy with M. de Fréjus; and, inasmuch as the king, in default of the Duc d'Orléans, would need some other master until he was of age and ability to be one to himself, I preferred it should be this prelate rather than any one else. I therefore went to see him, and told him what I had seen that morning of the Duc d'Orléans' condition; I predicted that his death could not long be deferred, and that it would probably happen suddenly without any warning. I therefore advised the bishop to take measures with the king at once, without losing a moment, to fill his place, which was all the more easy because he could not doubt of the king's affection for him, Fréjus. I reminded him that no one approached him in that respect; he had daily long *tête-à-têtes* with the king, which gave him every means and all facilities to secure his immediate succession to the office of prime minister the moment it became vacant. I found a man apparently very grateful for this advice and desire, but modest, cautious, and considering the office above his condition and attainment.

This was not the first time that our conversations had turned on this subject in general, but I had never before spoken of it as an immediate thing. He told me that he had thought much about it, but that he could not see any one except a prince of the blood who could be appointed prime minister without exciting envy, jealousy, and public outcry; in fact he saw no one but M. le Duc. I exclaimed against the danger of a prince of the blood, who would put every one under his feet, whom no one could resist, and whose relations and connections would pillage the country; and I reminded him that the late king had never been willing to put one of the princes of the blood into the Council, in order not to let them aggrandize themselves and assume authority. And what comparison was there between simply being of the Council of a king who governed and was so jealous of governing, and being the prime minister of a child-king, without experience, whose majority was only nominal, and under whom a prime minister prince of the blood would be the actual king? I added that Fréjus had had time since the death of the king to see with what avidity the princes of the blood had pillaged the finances, with what obstinacy they had protected Law and all that favoured their pillage, with what audacity they had encroached in every way; and he ought to be able to judge from that what would be the rule of a prime minister prince of the blood; and more especially of M. le Duc, who added to all that I had just represented a silliness that was almost stupidity, unconquerable obstinacy, inflexible firmness, insatiable self-interest, with which all France and himself would have to reckon; or rather he and they would have to submit to a will that was solely selfish.

I exhort him to take his measures.

Fréjus listened to these reflections with profound placidity, and rewarded them with the amenity of a tranquil, gentle smile. He did not answer a single one of the objections I had raised, except by telling me that there was truth in what I said, but that M. le Duc had some good in him; he had honour, integrity, and friendship for him; that he ought to prefer him out of gratitude for the friendship his father, the late M. le Duc, had always shown him; and finally, that to let the office of prime minister decline upon a private individual would be too great a fall, and would crush the shoulders of any such person who accepted it; that M. le Duc was the only one of the princes of the blood who was fit to fill that important place; that he was not really well-known to the king or familiar with him, though the place of superintendent of the education which he had wrested from the Duc du Maine might, and ought to have produced it; he would therefore have need of those who were closest to the king in his liking and privacy; and with this help and the relations that M. le Duc would be obliged to hold with them, all would go right: in short, the more he thought, and he had thought a great deal about it, the more he was convinced that there was no other way practicable.

Falseness and policy of that prelate.

His last words stopped me short. I told him he was more in the way of seeing things clearly than any one; that I contented myself with having warned him and told him what I thought ought to be done; that I could not help regretting he should let the office of prime minister escape him; but that, after all, I yielded, though against my own feeling and wish, to one who was more clear-sighted than I. It is easy to imagine with what assurances of gratitude, friendship, and confidence he seasoned his remarks. I returned to Meudon with the Duc d'Humières fully persuaded that Fréjus was only hindered by his timidity; that he was none the less eager for sovereign power; that in order to combine his ambition with his fear of the envy and jealousy that might upset him, his reflections had made this scheme of putting a prince of the blood in that place, expecting to find him inept and a mere semblance and shell of a prime minister, while he, Fréjus, would be the real one, through his power with the king, of whose heart and mind he knew himself to be the sole and complete possessor, — a fact which would render him so essential to M. le Duc that the latter would never dare to do the least thing without his sanction, and thus, without exciting envy or jealousy, and preserving always his external modesty, everything, in point of fact, would be in his hands. To butt against a project thus thought out, and a project of this nature, would have been to break my nose against a wall. So I spoked my wheel as soon as I felt his mind, and I refrained from telling him that Mme. de Prie [M. le Duc's mistress] and the other environers of M. le Duc would certainly defeat him, because they would choose to govern and profit, and would consequently make the prime minister shake off very quickly the yoke that Fréjus proposed to put upon him. I said this that same evening to Mme. de Saint-Simon, from whom I have never kept any secrets, and whose great good sense has been of such benefit to me all my life. She thought in this matter as I did.

Death of the Duc de Lauzun.

The Duc de Lauzun died on the 19th of November, aged ninety years and six months; he was, as I have said already, extraordinary in all ways by nature, and he took pleasure in making himself appear more so. He forbade, with good reason, all ceremonies at his funeral, and he was buried at the Petits-Augustins. He had no offices from the king but his old company of the

"Becs de Corbins," which was suppressed two days later. A month before his death he had sent for Dillon, *chargé d'affaires* in Paris of King James, and a very distinguished general officer, to whom he returned his collar of the Order of the Garter, and a George in onyx surrounded by very large and beautiful diamonds, requesting him to send them to the prince.

Sudden death of the Duc d'Orléans.

We have seen recently that the Duc d'Orléans dreaded a slow death which he could long foresee, — the sort of death which becomes a very precious mercy when that of understanding how to profit by it is added, — a sudden death was the kind he preferred. Alas! he obtained it; and it was even more sudden than that of his father, the late Monsieur, whose frame struggled longer against it. I went on the 21st of December, immediately after dinner, from Meudon to Versailles to see the Duc d'Orléans. I was alone with him for three quarters of an hour in his cabinet, where I had found him by himself. We walked up and down the room, talking over certain matters about which he was to render an account to the king that very afternoon. I saw no difference in him from his usual condition, which of late had grown heavier and more massive, but his mind was as clear and his reasoning as sound as ever. I returned immediately to Meudon, where I talked for a time, on arriving, with Mme. de Saint-Simon. The season was such that we had but two guests; I left her in her cabinet, and went to my own room.

At the end of an hour, at the most, I heard cries and a sudden confusion. I left my room, and met Mme. de Saint-Simon, bringing to me in much alarm a groom of my son, the Marquis de Ruffec, who had sent him to tell me that the Duc d'Orléans was seized with apoplexy. I was keenly shocked, but not surprised; I had expected it, as I have shown, for a long time. I fretted for my carriage, which kept me waiting on account of the distance of the new château from the stables. When it came, I flung myself into it and started as fast as I could go. At the gate of the park another courier from the Marquis de Ruffec stopped me and told me that all was over. I stayed there more than half an hour, absorbed in grief and in my reflections. After a while I decided to go on to Versailles, where I shut myself up at once in my apartments. Nangis had succeeded me with the Duc d'Orléans; he was soon dismissed and was followed by Mme. Falari, a pretty adventuress who had married an adventurer, a brother of the Duchesse de Béthune. She was one of the mistresses of this unhappy prince. His bag was all prepared to go and work with the king, and he had been talking nearly an hour with Mme. Falari while awaiting the time to go. She was very near him, each sitting beside the other in their armchairs, when he fell over, sideways, upon her, and from that moment showed not a ray of consciousness, nor the slightest appearance of life.

La Falari, terrified to the extent we can imagine, screamed for help with all her strength and redoubled her cries. Finding that no one answered. she rested the poor prince as best she could upon the two contiguous arms of the two chairs, and ran into the grand cabinet, into the chamber, into the antechambers, finding no one, and finally into the courtyard and the lower gallery. It was so near the prince's hour for working with the king that the servants were sure no one would visit him, and he himself had only to go up his own little staircase which opened into the king's last antechamber, where he always found a servant in waiting to take his bag. At last La Falari found persons, but no help, for which she despatched the first of them who came to hand. Chance, or to speak more properly, Providence had arranged this fatal event at an hour when every one had gone about his business or was paying visits, so that a good half-hour went by before either a physician or a surgeon came, and nearly as much before the servants of the Duc d'Orléans could be found.

As soon as the Faculty looked at him they saw there was no hope. He was hastily laid on the floor and bled; but he gave not the slightest sign of life, do what they would. The moment the news was given, everybody, of all species, flocked in; the great and the small cabinet were crammed with people. In less than two hours all was over, and, little by little, the solitude was as great as the crowd had been. As soon as help arrived La Falari fled, and went to Paris as fast as she could.

La Vrillière was the first to be informed of the seizure. He instantly rushed to tell the king and the Bishop of Fréjus; next, M. le Duc, — like a true courtier who knows that every moment is precious. Believing that the latter would surely be prime minister, he then hurried home and wrote out, on the chance of it, the letters-patent, which he copied from those of the Duc d'Orléans. Notified of the death the moment it occurred, he sent word of it to M. le Duc, and went back to the king's apartments, where imminent danger had already collected the most important persons belonging to the Court.

M. le Duc is made prime minister.

Fréjus, at the first news of the apoplexy, had settled the affair of M. le Duc with the king, whom he had, no doubt, prepared in advance (prompted by the state, so visible, of the Duc d'Orléans, especially after what I had said to him), for when M. le Duc went to the king at the moment that the death was announced, the most distinguished persons who were gathered about the door of the cabinet were shown into the room at the same time, and then, the doors being closed, Fréjus said aloud to the king, who was seen to be very sad, with his eyes red and tearful, that under the great loss he had just met with in the Duc d'Orléans (to whose praise Fréjus gave scarcely two words), he could not do better than ask M. le Duc to be so good as to take the whole burden of affairs upon him and accept the office of prime minister. The king, without saying a word, looked at Fréjus and consented with a nod of his head; whereupon M. le Duc instantly offered his thanks. La Vrillière, transported with joy at his own prompt action, had the oath of the prime minister, copied from that of the Duc d'Orléans, all ready in his pocket, and he proposed aloud to Fréjus that M. le Duc should take it on the spot. Fréjus told the king it was the proper thing to do, and M. le Duc took it immediately. Soon after, M. le Duc went away; all who were in the cabinet followed him; the crowd in the adjoining rooms swelled his train, and presently there was but one thing spoken of, namely, M. le Duc in his new office.

Gross blunder of the Duc de Chartres.

The Duc de Chartres, a clumsy rake, was in Paris with an opera girl, whom he was keeping. There it was that a courier found him with the news of his father's seizure; on his way to Versailles a second met him and told him of the death. He found no crowd when he got out of his carriage at Versailles, only the Ducs de Noailles and de Guiche, who offered him, very civilly, their services and all that could possibly depend upon them. He received them as importunate persons of whom he was in haste to be rid, and going up to his mother the Duchesse d'Orléans' apartment, he told her he had met two men who wanted to inveigle him finely, but he knew better than to fall into that trap and had soon got rid of them. This grand stroke of judgment, intelligence, and policy promised all that the prince has since then proved himself to be. They had great difficulty in making him understand that he had committed a gross blunder, and, even so, he continued to do the same sort of thing.

As for myself, after passing a cruel night, I went to the king's *lever*, — not to show myself, but to say a word more securely and promptly to M. le Duc, with whom I had been in constant intercourse since the *lit de justice* at the Tuileries. He always stood at these *levers* in the recess of the middle window, and as he was very tall he could easily be seen from behind the thick hedge that surrounded the room. On this occasion it was immense. I signed to M. le Duc to come and speak to me. He instantly pushed through the crowd and came to me. I led him to the recess of the window nearest the cabinet, and told him that in the bag which the Duc d'Orléans had prepared to go and work with the king was something which it was necessary I should speak about immediately to whoever succeeded him; that I was not in a condition to bear seeing people, and I begged him to send me word, as soon as he had a free moment, that I might go to him, and also that he would let me enter by the small door of his cabinet, which opened on the gallery, to spare me the crowd which would fill his apartments. He promised this in the course of the day, most graciously, adding excuses about the confusions of the first day of his new position, which did not enable him to fix a certain hour or one that was sure to suit me.

I go to see the Duchesse d'Orléans.

From there I went to the Duchesse Sforza and told her that in this great misfortune I felt obliged, from respect and attachment to the Duc d'Orléans, to mingle my sorrow with that of all who were nearest to him, and that it seemed to me indecent to omit the Duchesse d'Orléans. She, Mme. Sforza, knew the position I was in with the princess, which I had no desire to change, but on so sad an occasion it seemed to me that I ought to render to the widow of the Duc d'Orléans the respect of calling upon her, and I asked Mme. Sforza to ascertain whether she would receive me or not; saying that I should be equally content with a yes or a no; feeling that I had done what I thought I ought to do in this respect. She assured me that the Duchesse d'Orléans would be glad to see me and would receive me well. As her lodging was close to that of the duchess I waited her return. She brought me word that the Duchesse d'Orléans would be pleased to see me, and would receive me in a manner to satisfy me. I therefore went immediately.

I found her in bed, a few of her ladies, her principal officers, and the Duc de Chartres in the room, with all the decency and propriety that could supply the place of grief. As soon as I approached she spoke of our common sorrow, but not a word of what had passed between her and me; in fact, I had so stipulated. The Duc de Chartres went away, and I shortened the languishing conversation as much as I could. From there I went to the Duc de Chartres, who lodged in the apartment formerly occupied by his father before he was regent. I was told he was locked in. I returned three times in the course of the morning. The last time, his *valet de chambre* was ashamed, and went to call him. He came to the threshold of the door of his cabinet, where he was sitting with companions indescribably common. I saw a man full of his new position, bristling with it, not afflicted, but so embarrassed as scarcely to know where he was. I made him the strongest, clearest, most energetic compliment that I could, in a loud voice. He took me apparently for some henchman of the Ducs de Guiche and de Noailles, for he did not do me the honour to answer a word. I waited some moments, and seeing that he did not intend to issue from that ghost-like state, I made my bow and retired, without his taking a single step to accompany me, as he was bound to do, the length of his apartment; after which he intrenched himself again in his cabinet. It is true that as I retired I cast my eyes right and left upon the company, who seemed to me much surprised. I then went back to my own rooms, sick of running about the château.

Conversation between me and M. le Duc.

As I left the dinner-table a *valet de chambre* of M. le Duc came to tell me that he awaited me, and took me through the little door direct to his cabinet. He met me at the door, closed it, drew an arm-chair for me, and one for himself. I informed him about the matter I had spoken of in the morning, and after discussing it we began to talk of the event of the day. He told me that on leaving the king he had gone to the Duc de Chartres, to whom, after the compliments of condolence, he had offered all that depended upon him to win his friendship and testify his true attachment to the memory of the Duc d'Orléans; after that, as the Duc de Chartres continued silent, he had redoubled the protestations of his desire to serve him in all things; on which he received a curt monosyllable of thanks, given with a forbidding air which induced M. le Duc to withdraw. I told him what had happened to me in the morning with the same prince, about whom we made our complaints to each other. M. le Duc was very friendly and polite, and asked me, or rather urged me to come and see him quite often. I replied that, busy as I knew he would be with public matters and social affairs, I should feel a scruple in troubling him and those who had business with him; I should therefore only present myself when I had something to say to him; and as I was not accustomed to attendance in antechambers, I begged him to order his servants to let him know when I came and to admit me to his cabinet as soon as he conveniently could. Many compliments, much friendliness, and urgent invitations, etc.; the interview lasted nearly three quarters of an hour, after which I fled away to Meudon.

Mme. de Saint-Simon goes to Versailles to pay her court to the king.

Mme. de Saint-Simon went the next day to Versailles to pay her court to the king on this event, and to see the Duchesse d'Orléans and her son. M. de Fréjus paid a visit to Mme. de Saint-Simon as soon as he heard she was at Versailles, where she did not sleep. Through all the fine things that he said to her of me, and about me, she thought she was made to understand that he would rather have me in Paris than at Versailles. La Vrillière also went to see her for the same purpose; he was more afraid of me than even Fréjus, but concealed his meaning less because he had less craftiness, and he scandalized Mme. de Saint-Simon the more because of his ingratitude for all that I had done for him. The fellow thought that he had so ingratiated himself with M. le Duc by his haste in serving him and in swearing him in that he should get the duchy that he longed for without difficulty. When he had talked to me about it in the Duc d'Orléans' time, the vagueness of my replies did not put him at his ease in regard to me. He wanted to throw powder in the eyes of M. le Duc and deceive him with false precedents, and feared I would expose them.

Intimations given to her.

I did not need as much as this to confirm me in the course I had previously resolved to take, as soon as I became aware of the threatening condition of the Duc d'Orléans. I went to Paris, fully resolved not to appear before these new masters of the

I am confirmed in the resolution, long taken, to retire to Paris.

kingdom, except from rare necessity or for indispensable decorum; and then only for brief moments, with the dignity of a man of my sort and that of the position I had personally held. Happily for me, I had never at any time lost sight of this total change in my position; and, to tell the truth, the loss of Mgr. le Duc de Bourgogne, and all that I had hoped for in his government, had blunted my feelings to any other loss of the same nature. I had seen that dear prince taken from me at the same age my father was when he lost Louis XIII.; that is, my father was thirty-six and the king forty-one; I was thirty-seven when the prince, not quite thirty and about to ascend the throne and bring back justice, order, and truth into the world, was taken from me; and now, after him, I had lost a master of the kingdom, framed to live a century, who was six months older than I, and such as I have shown we had always been, he and I, to one another. All these things had prepared me to survive myself, and I had tried to profit by the teaching.

The effect of the death of the Duc d'Orléans on foreign countries.

The death of the Duc d'Orléans made much noise both within and without the kingdom, but foreign countries did him incomparably more justice and regretted him far more than Frenchmen. Though foreigners knew his weakness, of which England had taken singular advantage, they were none the less convinced, by their own experience, of the breadth and accuracy of his mind, the grandeur of his genius and his ideas, the singular penetration, wisdom, and shrewdness of his policy, the fertility of his expedients and of his resources, the dexterity of his conduct under changes of events and circumstances, his clearness in perceiving aims and combining means, his superiority over his ministers and those whom other powers sent to him, his exquisite discernment in unravelling and interpreting affairs, his easy knowledge of how to answer instantly on all things, when he chose. Such grand, such rare gifts for governing made them fear him and treat him prudently; but the gracious manner he gave to all things, which charmed in the midst of opposition, made him seem to them always amiable. They respected, moreover, his grand and naïve valour. The short period of the spell by which that wretched Dubois had, as it were, extinguished this prince, had only served to raise him in their eyes by comparison of his conduct when it was truly his own, with his apparent conduct, which only bore his name and was really that of his minister. They saw that minister die and the prince take back the helm with the same talents they had formerly admired; moreover, his weakness, which was indeed his great defect, was felt much less outside the kingdom than within it.

On the king.

The king, touched by his unalterable respect, his attention to please him, his manner of speaking to him, his way of working with him, mourned him, and was truly grieved at his loss; so much so that he never spoke of him afterwards, and he did so often, without affection, esteem, and regret; so surely does truth make itself known, in spite of craft, and all the industry of lies and wicked calumny, as I shall have occasion to show in the additions that I propose to make to these Memoirs, should God give me time to do so.

M. le Duc, who mounted so high on this death, showed an honourable and a becoming countenance about it. Mme. la Duchesse restrained herself very properly. The bastards, who gained nothing by the change, could scarcely rejoice. Fréjus kept on all fours; one could see him sweating under the constraint, but his mute hopes escaped at every moment, — his whole countenance sparkled in spite of himself.

The Court was little divided, because the sense of Courts is corrupted by passions. There were some men with sound eyes who saw him as foreigners did; and they, being also continual witnesses of the charm of his mind, the facility of their access to him, his patience, his gentleness in listening, which never varied, his kindness, which came to him so naturally (though sometimes it might be only a mask), the pleasant wit with which he could evade or reject without ever wounding, — these men felt the whole weight of his loss. Others, in greater number, felt sorry also, but less in regret for him than from knowledge of the character of his successor and of those who surrounded him. But the bulk of the Court regretted him not at all; some because they belonged to opposing cabals, others from indignation at the indecency of his life, or at the game he had played of promising and not performing; others, again, who were pure malcontents, with little ground to be so, a crowd of ungrateful beings, of whom the world is full and who in Courts make up the greater number, with those who fancy they have more to hope from a successor, and, lastly, the mass of idlers, stupidly eager after novelty.

On the Court.

In the Church the saints and the pious people rejoiced at their deliverance from the scandal of his life and the force of his example to libertines; while the Jansenists and the bullists, either from ambition or foolishness, agreed for once in being all consoled. Paris and the provinces, that is, the body of the people, desperate at the cruel operation of the finances and the perpetual juggling to draw money out of them, which made all fortunes uncertain and ruined families, — incensed, moreover, by the monstrous dearness of everything, whether luxuries or the commonest necessaries, produced by these very operations, — had long groaned heavily for relief and deliverance.

On the Church, Paris, and the provinces.

Who is there that does not desire to count on something certain? Who does not dread the schemes of financial legerdemain lest he fall, in spite of all precautions, a prey to unavoidable snares, until his patrimony or his fortune slips through his fingers, and he finds himself without protection in his rights or in the laws, not knowing how to live and maintain his family?

On the people.

A situation so harsh and so general, emanating necessarily from so many contradictory phases given successively to the finances under the false idea of repairing the chaos and ruin in which they were found on the death of Louis XIV., did not allow the public to regret the man whom it considered to be its author. This was just what I foresaw would happen in the arrangement or rather the derangement of the finances, the onus of which I earnestly desired to take from the Duc d'Orléans by the assembling of the States-general which I proposed to him, and to which he agreed until the Duc de Noailles, for his own selfish interests, prevented it, as I have said elsewhere, on the death of the king. Little by little as the years have rolled on, the scales have fallen from many eyes, the Duc d'Orléans is regretted with keen regret, and that justice is now rendered to him which was always his due.

The day after the death of the Duc d'Orléans the Comte de Toulouse declared his marriage with the sister of the Duc de Noailles, widow of the Marquis de Gondrin, eldest son of the Duc d'Antin. She was formerly lady of the palace to the late dauphine. Society, which abounds in fools and jealous souls, did not see her assume the rank of her new position without some envious mutterings. I had no reason, as I have shown elsewhere, to like the Duc de Noailles, and I had never restrained myself towards him, but truth compels me to say that the birth of a Noailles is such that there could have been no cause for gainsaying if one of them had wedded a prince of the blood.

Conclusion: truth, self-restraint, impartiality.

I have now reached the period at which I have all along intended to close these Memoirs.[1] There can be no good memoirs unless they are perfectly true, and no true ones unless written by one who has either seen and managed himself the things of which he writes, or who gathers them from persons worthy of the utmost confidence who have themselves seen and managed them; moreover, he who writes must love the truth to the point of sacrificing all things to it. On this last point I shall venture to give testimony to myself, convinced that none of all those who have known me will deny it. This love of the truth has even been an injury to my career. I have often felt this, but I have preferred truth to all things else, and I have never bent myself to any concealment; I can honestly say that I have cherished truth against my own interests. Any one can easily see the traps and deceptions, sometimes very coarse ones, into which I fell, seduced by friendship or by love of the State, which I have never ceased to prefer to all other considerations without reserve, and always to any personal interest; in fact, I have refrained from writing of many occasions because they concerned myself chiefly and were without enlightenment or interest as to public affairs, or the course of events. It has been seen that I persevered in obtaining the finances for the Duc de Noailles because I believed him, very improperly, the most capable, richest, and best-provided seigneur among all those from whom we had to choose, and this at the very time when his great rascality to me first came to my knowledge. Also the Memoirs show all that I did to save the Duc du Maine against my dearest and most vital interests, because I thought it dangerous to attack both him and the parliament at the same time, when the parliament affair was the most pressing and could not be deferred. I content myself with those two facts, without dwelling on many others which are scattered along these Memoirs as they happened in the course of events, or were connected with the affairs of the Court and society.

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[1] Saint-Simon alludes in several places to a continuation of his Memoirs. Can it be that he really wrote their sequel down to the year 1743, the period of Fleury's death? The doubt can only be cleared up by obtaining permission to study the papers of the duke which are preserved at the ministry of Foreign Affairs. We have tried in vain to do this, and can only recommend the search to others who may be more fortunate than ourselves. (Note by the French editor.)

It remains to say something on the matter of impartiality; that inherent point, held to be so difficult, I do not fear to say so impossible to him who writes and who has seen and handled that of which he writes; for such a man is charmed with those who are true and upright; he is irritated against the scoundrels who swarm in Courts. The stoic is a noble, grand chimera. I do not, therefore, pique myself on my impartiality; I should do so vainly; it will too plainly be seen in these Memoirs that praise and blame flow out spontaneously as I myself am affected towards others; that both are lukewarm about persons who are indifferent to me, but always warm for virtue and against dishonourable persons according to their degree of vice or virtue. Nevertheless, I may give myself this further testimony — and I flatter myself that the tissue of these Memoirs will not disprove it: I have been infinitely on my guard against my affections and my aversions, especially against the latter, endeavouring not to speak of either without scales in hand, not merely that I might not exaggerate but even overestimate anything; I have tried to forget myself, to beware of myself as of an enemy; to do exact justice, and to make pure truth stand high over all. It is in this manner that I claim to have been entirely impartial, and I believe that there is no other way of being so.

As for the truth and accuracy of what I have related, it will be seen by the Memoirs themselves that nearly all is drawn from what has passed through my own hands, and the rest from what I knew from others who had acted in the matters I relate. I name those persons, and their names, as well as my intimate relations with them, are beyond suspicion. What I have learned from less sure sources I point out; where I was ignorant I have not been ashamed to avow it. In this way, these Memoirs are from the fountain-head and at first hand. Their truth, their authenticity cannot be called in question; and I believe I may say that until now there have been no others which have comprised more varied, more discriminated, and more detailed topics, nor any that form a more instructive and curious group.

As I shall know nothing of it, little will it matter to me, but if these Memoirs ever see the light I do not doubt they will excite a prodigious rebellion. Every one is attached to his own, to his family, his interests, his pretensions, his chimeras, not one of which will submit to the slightest contradiction. People are friends of Truth only so far as she favours them, and she is apt not to favour them in all things. Those of whom we say good are not obliged to us, because truth required it. Those, and they are far the greater number, of whom we say the reverse, are furious because this harm is proved by facts; and as in the period of which I have written, especially towards its close, all things tended to decadence, confusion, chaos (which has since grown worse), and these Memoirs stand for order, law, truth, fixed principles, and strive to show plainly what was contrary to them, the convulsion against this mirror of truth will be general. But they are not written for those banes of the State who poison it, who are bringing it to perdition by their madness, their selfishness; they are written for those who wish to be enlightened in order to prevent that perdition, but who, unfortunately, are carefully set aside by men in power and influence, who fear nothing so much as the light; they are written for men who are not susceptible of any interests but those of justice, truth, reason, law, and sound policy, aiming solely for the public good.

I have an observation to make on the conversations I have had with many persons, especially with the Duc de Bourgogne, the Duc d'Orléans, M. de Beauvilliers, the ministers, the Duc du Maine once, three or four times with the late king, and finally with M. le Duc and other considerable persons, and the opinions I have formed, given, and argued. They are such, and in such number, that I can well believe that a reader who has never known me will be tempted to class them with those fictitious speeches which historians often put into the mouths of generals, ambassadors, senators, or conspirators, to adorn their pages. But I can protest, with the same truth that has so far led my pen, that there is not a single conversation or discourse of all those that I have held and reported which is not related in these Memoirs with the most scrupulous fidelity to truth. If there be anything in this respect with which I can reproach myself, it is that I have weakened rather than strengthened my own remarks; for memory sometimes drops the point, and we speak more vividly and with greater force when animated by scenes and persons than we can render in a report. I will add, with the same confidence I have shown above, that no one of all those who have known me and lived with me, would conceive the least suspicion as to the fidelity of the recital I give of those conversations, vehement as they may seem; there is not a person among them all who would not recognize me word by word.

One defect, among others, has always displeased me in memoirs; and that is that when the reader has finished them he loses sight of the principal personages and the interest he feels in the rest of their lives remains unsatisfied. He wants to know immediately what became of them, without seeking elsewhere for knowledge which his laziness will not take the trouble to get. This is something that I would like to prevent if God will give me time; though I cannot do it with the same accuracy as when I was a part of everything. In later years, it is true, Cardinal Fleury never hid from me anything that I wished to know about foreign affairs (being himself almost always the first to speak of them), or about certain affairs of the Court; still, all this was so little followed up on my part and even then with such great indifference, and with great gaps occurring in my knowledge, that I have every reason to fear this supplement, or sequel to my Memoirs may be very languid, badly elucidated, and wholly different from all that I have hitherto written. But at any rate, the reader will see what becomes of the personages who have appeared in these Memoirs down to the death of Cardinal Fleury, which is all that I propose to myself to do.

Shall I say a word about my style, its negligence, the repetition of the same words close together, the synonyms often too profuse, above all the obscurity arising from the length of sentences and perhaps their repetition? I have felt these defects; I could not avoid them, carried away as I was by the subject and little attentive to the manner of conveying it, except that I might make it understood. I was never academical; I never could prevent myself from writing rapidly. To make my style more correct and more agreeable by correcting it would have been to recast the whole work, and toil like that was beyond my strength and ran the risk of failure. To properly correct what one has written requires the knowledge of how to write; it will readily be seen here that I have nothing to boast of in that respect. I have thought only of truth and accuracy. I dare to say that both will be found in my Memoirs; that they are, in fact, the soul and the law of them; and that for their sake the style deserves a benevolent indulgence. It has all the more need of it as I cannot promise to do better in the sequel I propose to write.

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